

A.I. AWARD-WINNING SRIMAD RAJCHANDRRAJJI-INSPIRED
MAHATMA GANDHIJI'S HINDI PLAY

• प्रहरीसनिक •

ENGLISH VERSION BEING STAGED AGAINST AT WASHINGTON D.C.

The Great Warrior of Ahimsa

By

• PROF. PRATAPKUMAR J. TOLIYAL •

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ENGLISH VERSION OF
GANDHI CENTENNIAL PLAYWRITING COMPETITION'S

AWARD-WINNING HINDI PLAY

" MAHA-SAINIK "

" **THE GREAT WARRIOR OF NON VIOLENCE**"
" COULD THERE BE SUCH A WARRIOR ? "

A PLAY
BASED ON THE GLIMPSES OF
MAHATMA GANDHI'S LIFE AND IDEALS,
INSPIRED BY HIS SPIRITUAL GUIDE

SRIMAD RAJCHANDRAJI

" THE MAKER OF MAHATMA "

BY

PROF. PRATAPKUMAR J. TOLIYA

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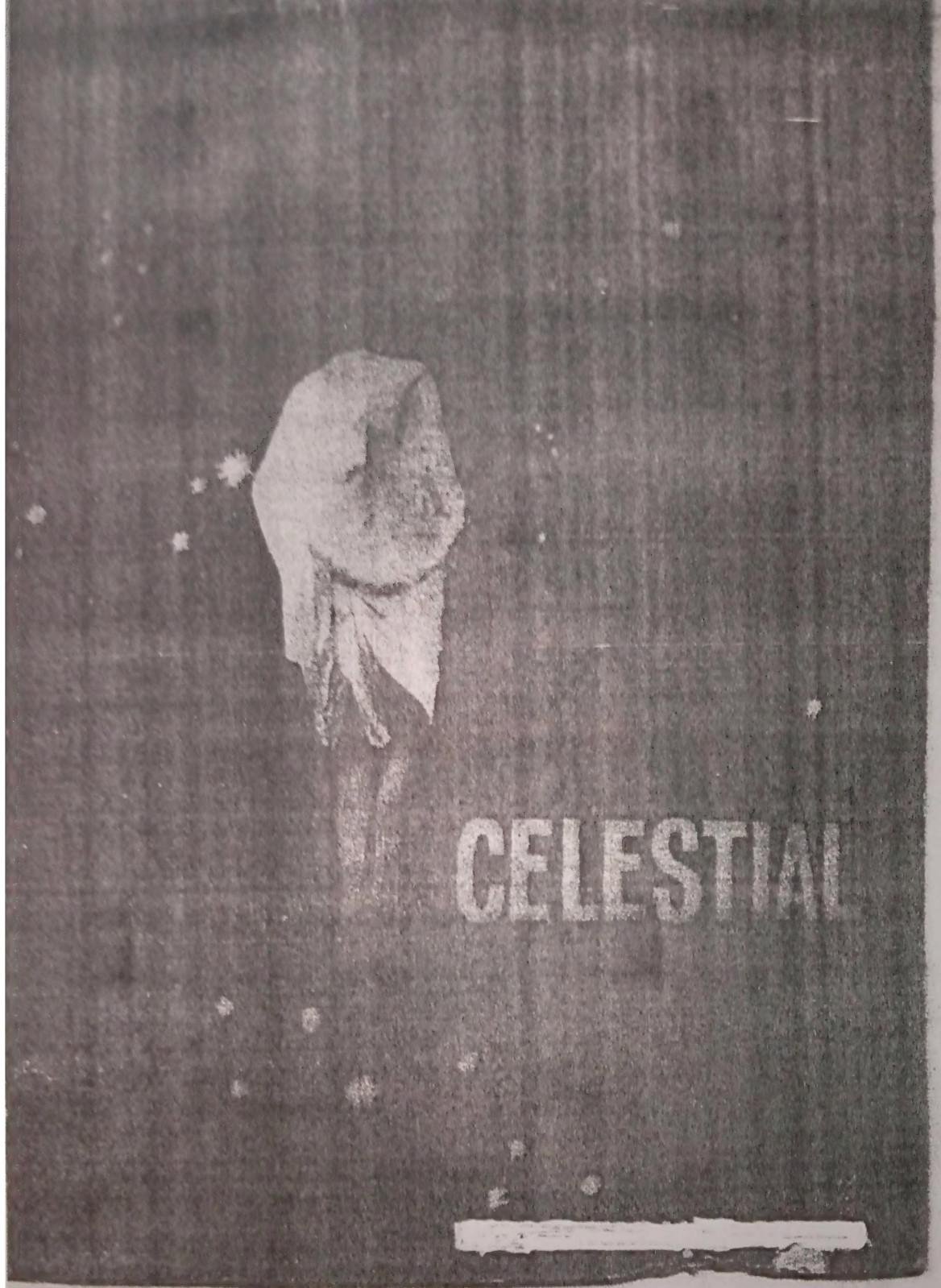
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MAHATMA GANDHI--THE GREAT WARRIOR OF AHIMSA : "M A H A S A I N I E"
ON HIS SOLITARY VOYAGE:LONELY PATH:"EKLA CHALO RE".



AWARDED PLAY ON M.G.

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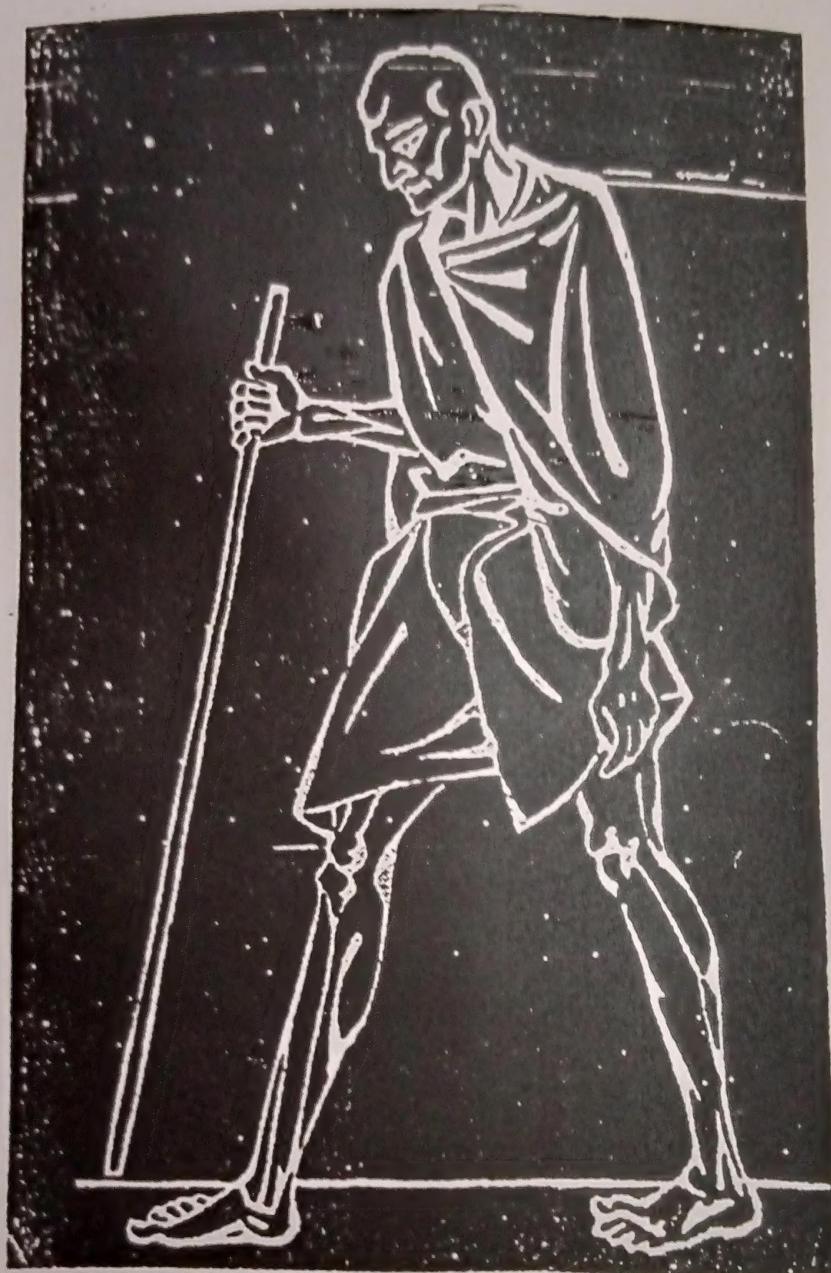
THE GREAT WARRIOR OF AHMAZ

RETURNING TO HIS DIVINE HOME.

By

PROF. PRATAPKUMAR J. TOLITA .

THE GREAT WARRIOR OF AHIMSA (NON - VIOLENCE) :
" COULD THERE BE SUCH A WARRIOR ? "



PROF. PRATAPKUMAR J. TOLIYA

A UNIQUE MODERN PLAY HIGHLIGHTING IDEAL OF NON-VIOLENCE
ON UNIVERSAL SCALE

* THE GREAT WARRIOR OF AHIMSA *
(NON-VIOLENCE)

OR

* COULD THERE BE SUCH A WARRIOR ? *

PLAY BASED ON

BHAGAWAN MAHAVIRA'S AHIMSA : NON-VIOLENCE
ADOPTED IN ACTION BY MAHATMA GANDHIJI IN HIS
AHIMSAK SATYAGRAHA ENCOMPASSING IN FUTURE GLOBAL STAR WARS.
ALONG WITH THE GLIMPSES OF IDEALS OF AHIMSA SHOWING ITS IMPACT
AS PRACTICALLY EXPERIENCED AND INSPIRED BY BHAGAWAN MAHAVEER'S
PRESENT DAY FOLLOWER, MODERN JAIN SEER & GANDHIJI'S SPIRITUAL
GUIDE

S R I M A D R A J C H A N D R A J I
"T H E M A K E R O F M A H A T M A "

*

By

P R O F . P R A T A P K U M A R J . T O L I Y A

M.A.Hindi, M.A.English, Sahitya Ratna, Jain Sangit Ratna.
Formerly, P.G. Professor of Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad.
Ex-Principal, National College, A'bad, Mahila Arts College,
Visnagar, Jain Training College, Bangalore.
Currently, Professor of Jainology, Surana College and
Jina Bharati, Bangalore; Author of several Books; Singer-
Director of Oriental Jain Records & Compact Discs,
International Speaker, Innovator, 'Music for Meditation',
Founder of Self-run activity of Vardhaman Bharati Inter-
-national Foundation, B'lore; Editor of "SAPTABHASHI ATMA-
-SIDDHI and other Jainological Works and above all,
Insighted Disciple of

DR. P A N D I T S U K H L A L J I , D.LITT.

(And above all, who, the author, stayed with Bapu at Poona for 15 days as
a Scout Volunteer of BHARTI PATHAK, at the age of 15 in 1945-1946)

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"THE GREAT WARRIOR OF NON-VIOLENCE"
"COULD THERE BE SUCH A WARRIOR?"

A play on Mahatma Gandhiji's Mission of Ahimsa(Non-Violence) and Shanti (Peace), inspired by SRINAD RAJCHANDRAJI, his Spiritual Guide, with glimpses from latter's life by PROF. PRATAPKUMAR J. TOLIYA, disciple of padmabhooshan Pragyachakshu Dr. PANDIT SUKHLALJI D.Litt; with a forward by.....

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DEDICATED TO

My most revered Great Learned Master

Padmabhooshan Pragya... DR. PANDIT SUKHLALJI, D.Litt,

Gandhian Jain The Milton — like Philosopher of Modern India
who had the Scriptures, Cultural History & Philosophies
of last 2500 years just like a living Encyclopaedia on the
tip of his tongue and who endowed me with the unusual insight
of life and discriminatory analytic & synthetic thinking
enormously obliged by endowing me my 14 years. Settled his feet at 14 years
when enlightened by life & learning during my 14 years.

"THE GREAT WARRIOR OF AHIMSA"

REFLECTIONS AND REVIEWS OF SOME CRITICS & SCHOLARS
WHO READ THIS PLAY.

(1)

" We went through the entire script of your Play in English "The Great Warrior of Ahimsa" (Or "Could there be such a Warrio ?"). We enjoyed it too much. Its Theme, Entry Scenes Background Musics and Poet Dukhayalji's song of "Shanti-Ke-Sipahi-Chale" really creates tremendous heart-touching effect and impact on the Spectator along with Commentary and various colourful light and sound effects. In this process the Play is highlighting the ideals of Ahimsa of Bhagawan Mahaveer, Srimad Rahchandraji, Mahatma Gandhiji, Muni Sahajanandaghanchi and Acharya Vinobaji's Panchavati Teertha which transforms and transcends the hearts of the viewers.

" Moreover, the actual contribution/Bravery of Non-violence in practice which you have remembered ~~in your~~ in your Preface is extremely important and inspiring one from the historical point of view for the field of Shanti Sena, wherein you have indicated your personal role also as a Shanti Sainik with Yellow Scarf under my leadership during the grave Communal Riots of 1969 in Ahmedabad. For this, as a Playwright, you deserve not hundreds but thousands of Compliments. Thanks".

=Dr.HARISH~VYAS(Professor, All India Pedestrian Sarvo--days Worker and Leader of Shanti Sena during 1969 Communal Riots at Ahmedabad, establishing Peace thro' Shanti Sena by risking life and keeping Death ready in the fist, exhibiting live spirit of Mahatma Gandhi's & Srimad Rajchandra's ideals of Ahimsa.)

(2)" The play presents Everlasting influences of Gandhian Ideals. Gandhi is proved here as an inspiration to follow the Path of Non-Violence. Gandhi is a Unique Warrior who listened to the Words of his preache r. Non Violence: Is it the Weapon to fight?: Gandhi practised it. Could Non-Violence be a shield against Wars & Destruction ? It could. Gandhi showed and proved it. Best Compliments to this Unique Play." *E.P.Menon, Global Pedestrian and Author of "Foot Prints on Friendly Roads".

(3)"A befitting Play for befitting Title of "The Great Warrior of Ahimsa" and "The Maker of Mahatma".—MAKARAND DAVE, Guj.SaintPoet

(4)"A rare Play with Good imagination and Ideas with novel Theme. I It reminds Acharya Kripalani doubtfully telling Gandhiji: !Bapu! I am the Professor of History and History says that there had been no War so far without violence." Gandhiji replied challengingly: 'YOU ARE THE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY & I AM THE MAKER OF HISTORY.I WILL PROVE THAT NON VIOLENT WAR IS POSSIBLE AND YOU WILL PROFESS
TEACH IT".

Arhat Jinas' - Tirthankar Bhagawan Mahaveera's principles were born out of limitless, purposeless Compassion for Universal welfare and peace. Prime principle of Ahimsa multi-dimensionally embodied with Atmajnana(Self-knowledge) and Anekantvada-Syadvada(many-sided points of views), the overall integrated vision of Whole Truth and Life, is the only way out to solve all ills, all problems facing the mankind.

Bhagawan Mahaveera himself and his Great Heritage-line dedicated followers walking in his footsteps throughout the Ages, practised Ahimsa and other principles in their actual lives on spiritual level. Mahaveera himself was a majestically Great Warrior of Ahimsa who conquered his inner enemies like hatred & infatuation etc, and acquired Atmajnana-Kevaljnana paving the same path of INNER WAR firstly.

Out of several others, Bhagawan Mahaveera's present-Age follower Srimad Rajchandra followed the same principle of Ahimsa in his day-to-day religious life on practical and commercial level. He applied Ahimsa and other Jaina Principles and conquering his above-referred inner vices (of infatuation, hatred, ignorance, etc.) he too acquired the light of Atmajnana.

Mahatma Gandhi, greatly influenced by Srimad Rajchandra, not only practised and applied the principle of Ahimsa on his personal level, but also on the National and Global Level. His Ahimsa, Ahimsak Satyagraha became successful and instrumental in bringing Indian Independence. He became a uniquely Victorious Warrior of Ahimsa setting an example. He proved that Ahimsa could be applied on internal Spiritual Level, as well as on external Practical, Political, Material level too. Thus his contribution to Ahimsa, learnt and acquired from Srimad Rajchandra, the ardent follower of Bhagawan Mahaveera, is an unusual event of modern times.

In fact, Srimad Rajchandra and Mahatma Gandhi, both proved that Bhagawan Mahaveera's vast, integrated

compassionable Ahimss could be positively practised on personal, commercial, political, social, national and Global levels. Gandhi's concept of Ahimss-based SHANTI SENĀ proved that Wars could be averted or fought without Weapons.

A future Warrior of Ahimss like him could successfully apply this hatredless Non-violent War against injustices and wrongs of the world successfully. May they be nearby, national Ground Wars, Global Sky Wars or even forthcoming inter-continen-tal Star Wars !. Ahimss(Non-Violence) should be everywhere with Vijnana(Science) in the Centre.

Parsighted Bhagawan Mahaveer's Multi-dimensional integrated Ahimss has opened several avenues of this peace-providing blessing to humanity through Srimad Rajchandra and Mahatma Gandhi for implementation of Non-Violence in day-to-day individual and collective life. Following this a lot of blood-shed and Violence could be washed out from the world. Rabindranath Tagore had rightly and timely described today's Violent World as a "Greatly Mad mad world" in one of his wonderful songs "MIRSHAY UNMATTI PRITHVI"(quoted in this Play).

Co-incidentally, these words by this humble Play-wright are written in the backdrop and background of currently ongoing American-British War on Iraq on international level (which cannot be justified unless or even it unearthes the hidden Weapons of Mass Destruction, without spreading MASS DESPERATION !) and constant Cowardly Warlike Terrorist Attacks on innocent Kashmiris, recently the poor Pundits on Indian National level. Even the Gujarat Violence last year and the like. Have we, the bookish followers of Ahimss, ever thought of, tried of applying Ahimss just like Gandhi did, on national and international levels in context of various Wars and Problems facing today's world ? If Gandhi could do it in course of his Ahimsak Satyagrahs during independence movement why not we ? This is the small but useful message this small Play is bringing to us. Why have we not formed and tried a Self-sacrificing Peace Brigade-Army of Peace Soldiers-SHANTI SAINIKS to quell, silence and win the Terrorists ? Gandhi, Vinoba, J.P., Ravishankar Mshraj, Martin Luther King and others have tried and done this in the modern times !!

Why we are not inspiring others for the same on international level ? Why the Peace-lovers of the world could

—
not offer such a Non-violent resistance on War-fronts ?
Why the Anti-War protesters of current war, in place of
more Demonstrations, go on actual War-fields and prevent
and convince all concerned or die for the cause of Ahimss ?
Time has come for Ahimss lovers to think and do something
in this regard, firstly in India against continuous Terro-
rist Attacks against the innocents!!!

If someone is enlightened or moved through
this Play, bringing the above message in an imaginative
dramatic way, this humble author will be tremendously
overwhelmed and feel gratified. That will be his greatest
prize, greatest award, greatest appreciation.

May (the play) be instru-
-mental in carrying Bhagawan Mahaveera's Ahimss across the
limited barriers of our religious places like the Upashayyas
and Temples, etc. May this great principle of Ahimss spread
across the Seven Seas, across the whole Universe and proclaim
Victory and Glory of Bhagawan Mahaveera's Universal, preachings
and establish the all-uplifting KINGDOM OF COMPASSION : The
SARVODAYA TSARTHA!

Shivamastu Sarva Jyotisha.

Jainam Jayati Shashansm.

Aum Shantihi, Shantihi, Shantihi. *Om Joliya*

Parul, 1580, Kumarswamy Lyt.) Prof. PRATAPKUMAR J. TOLIYA
Bangalore-560078/4 26667882)

24th March, 2003.

24 May, 2007

1 January, 2016

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Parul, 1580, Kumarswamy Lyt.) *PratapKumar J. Toliya*
Bangalore-560078. (M 26667882) Prof. PRATAPKUMAR J. TOLIYA

24th March, 2003.

24 May, 2007
1 January, 2016

(ii)

abroad and to meet him at Bombay. He had visualized and foreseen India's upliftment and independence at this Barrister M.K.Gandhi's worthy hands. This advance Vision in Meditation was prior to the subsequent meeting between the two for the first time that materialised soon thereafter when Srimad Rajchandraji returned back to Bombay from Solitary Idar caves.

For the sake of truth, these hidden facts should be brought to light, especially when humble, **unasuming, publicity-evading** secret Seeker and Self-realised real Saint Seer Srimad Rajchandraji himself had never intended, cared or claimed for such a credit even in dream !!

Also when, as mentioned before, most of the historians and Film-makers of Mahatma Gandhi have not taken serious and honest note about the impacts of compassionate, simple and spiritual life and ideals of Srimad Rajchandra, the real "Maker of Mahatma" and chief inspiring and guiding non-violent force behind Gandhi and his non-Violent Wars, it becomes necessary, as it is high time now, that this important omission be rectified and brought to the notice of the peace-craving world, as artistically indicated in sequences of this play. In fact, this play was written early in 1969, the Gandhi Centenary year, probably much before the above films were made and produced. ✓

There are three main and apparent motives behind writing this Play, which have emerged from the demand of this age and which have a particular background:

- (1) To highlight the above missing source of Gandhi.
- (2) To highlight the supremacy of non-violence of the unique warrior, non-violent warrior, in Gandhi and this too in the future times and for the future generations which are sure to doubt the very existence of such a warrior, such a seemingly frail & feeble person walked on this earth, as Albert Einstein has rightly observed.
- (3) To inspire the above future generations and warriors to adopt non-violent resistance and non-co-operation as taught by Gandhi, even in course of Planet & Star Wars, different and difficult, but not impossible, to be prevented or changed keeping the welfare of the entire humanity inspite of necessary fighting for Injustices, etc. This is possible through sincere discrimination, dialogues and following of Truth & Compassion and non-violence as Gandhi did. This right thinking is going to bring CHANGE OF HEART and Courage to refuse the wrong and world-damaging-destroying orders of the Superiors of the Wars, character of once cruel Major Captain turned non-violent Warrior following change of his heart in this play is one example of this motive.

While mentioning these motives, the humble author of this small play has a little but meaningful background and a glimpse of which seems to be worth-mentioning with a view to better understanding the formation of this play. In doing so, I shall consciously try to present the facts only avoiding the possibilities of self glorification. ✓

Srimad Rajchandraji, the source of this play and Spiritual Guide or Guiding Force of Gandhiji was about two years elder to the latter. He passed away in 1901 at a very young age of 33-34 years. I was not fortunate to see him personally, but could come across his poems and writings and literature from my childhood, ^{through my kind father} which had become a matter of joy, inspiration and privilege. The same thing was in case of Mahatma Gandhiji's (X)

(ii)

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During this long span of time, though I had the rarest opportunities to have long long dialogues and discussions with Baba Vinobaji on a number of literary, musical and philosophical subjects including those on Srimad Rajchandraji and Gandhiji. Moreover, being a great lover of music and I always moving with him with my SITAR, he used to ask me to sing devotional and spiritual songs written by Srimad Rajchandraji. Along with innumerable episodes with him, one of the memorable ones is of organising music-directing and singing his popular Secular Prayer Song of OM TATSAT with 20,000 School Children trained by this humble self at Baba's behest. It was on the sands of river Sabarmati at Ahmedabad on 20 December 1958. A number of such memories have taken the form of books yet unpublished. (*F,G*)

In addition to my above acquaintances, contacts and associations of Gandhian line of thoughts and studies, I was privileged to acquire the same related with Srimad Rajchandraji. The latter's studious descendants, scholars, works and places like various Ashramas associated with his ideology are amongst this. After leaving Vinobaji's intermittent walking tour shelters, I had to stay at Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and for awhile at Santiniketan for my Graduation and Double Post Graduation studies in Hindi, English Literature and Music. At Ahmedabad, I was extremely fortunate to get graceful shelter to study Jain and Comparative Philosophy also under my Great Obliging Master and rare Philosopher-Scholar Padmabhooshan Dr. Pandit Sukhlalji Sanghvi, D.Litt, who was also known to be a Gandhian Jain Scholar and a studious authority on Srimad Rajchandraji (*H). Another such Scholar was Pandit Becharajji Doshi and also at times Muni Jinvijayji. All these were distinguished Professors at Gandhiji's Gujarat Vidyapith, which, later on absorbed this humble self also as one of its Post Graduate Senior Lecturers during 1968-1970.

Apart from having been associated with the above scholars as referred to above, I had not only the privilege to visit almost all the places and Ashramas of Srimad Rajchandraji, but also to stay and pass time in solitary seclusions, especially at Srimad Rajchandra Vihar Bhavan, Idar, the pious place of Srimadji's meditations and realisations (which has a prime reference in this play) and caves of Srimad Rajchandra Ashram, Ratnakoot, Hampi, Karnataka, under the further significant shelters of Srimadji's ardent follower-yogic practitioner-Scholarly Jain Monk, Y.Y. Sri Sahajanandghanji and Holy Mother Mataji Dhandeviji. This humble Self has remained associated with this lastly mentioned Hampi Ashram even now after passing away of the two latter Masters. (*I)

During and after these Spiritual Shelters, seekings, studies and tours, my humble literary writings and musical'creations went on.

A few of these, apart from other writings, the relevant Dramas and Plays to be mentioned are popular Radio Plays like "PRAGATI BHOOMIDAN KI GANGA" "VISHWATMA VINOBA", "RAVI REKHA", "SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA" (Broadcasts from A.I.R. Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Rajkot and Bangalore) and well-acclaimed stage plays like "SHAHIDON KI AWAZ", "JAB MURDE BHI JAGATE HAIN!", "VIDROHINI", etc., which were not only written, but were also Directed and Staged at Ahmedabad, Amreli, Visnagar, Hyderabad and other places with over-whelming success for several nights.

(*F) Reminiscenes of Days with Vinoba.

(*G) Sthitpragya ke Sang.

(*H) "SRIMAD NI ATMOPANISHAD", "SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA & GANDHIJI" etc. ("PRAGYA SANCHARAYA"
Edited by this author).

(*I) Dakshinapath Ki Sadhana yatra: "A Seeker's Voyage to Hampi :

"IN THE MYSTERIOUS LAND OF MY MYSTIC MASTER". (Now included in Sri SAHAJANANDGHANJI'S
Gauravmitti Biography too)

As regards my Musical Contribution and Creations, apart from my Personal Stage Performances of Rendering Multi-lingual Hindustani Music, songs on Sitar and MUSIC FOR MEDITATION, etc., the above-mentioned Great Masters of mine graced me with inspiration, innovation and ability to plan, render, musically compose and produce about two Dozen Long Playing Gramophone Discs and about one hundred titles of Cassettes beginning with the famous poetical works of SRIMAD RAJCHANDRAJI, namely SRI ATMASIDDHI SHASHTRA, RAJ PAD, PARAMGURU PAD, etc. in musical forms in 1974-1975. Followed by these were other L.P.s like SRI BHAKTAMARA STOTRA, KALYAN MANDIR STOTRA, RISHI MANDAL STOTRA, MAHAVIR DARSHAN, VIR VANDANA, MAHAYOGI ANANDGHAN KE PAD, STHITPRAGYA, ISHOPANISHAD & OM TATSAT (Both blessed by Acharya vinobaji and released by Prime Minister MORARJI DESAI and RAVISHANKAR MAHARAJ), ATMAKHOJ, DHYAN SANGIT, etc...etc...

But before these Musical Creations, when the writing of this Play (MAHA-SAINIK: COULD THERE BE SUCH A WARRIOR?) took place in 1969 during Gandhi Centenary, I had two important aspect of my background. On one hand, so far as studies and technique of Dramatics are concerned, I had, during my Post Graduation of English Literature, undergone studies of Greek Tragedies as well as Shakespearean Tragedies and Ibsenian and Shavian Plays' peculiarities in addition to a number of Hindi Dramatists' styles during my Post Graduation of Hindi Literature. On the other hand, I had acquired some experience of writing and staging live my previous plays mentioned hereabove. This is my first background so far as literary, technique-pertaining and Stage Experience is concerned. My Second Background being actual and practical one, has one meaningful & live significance theme is concerned. It happened like this :

After my walking tours with Vinobaji and various studies under the shelter of Dr. Pandit Sukhlaji and elsewhere, I began my services in Educational, Literary and Musical fields as a college Lecturer in Hindi & English and Principal thereafter from 1960, at Swaminarayan College Ahmedabad, Prataprai Arts College Amreli, National College Ahmedabad and Mahila Arts College Visnagar all in Gujarat. Lately in 1968, I was privileged to join as a Senior Post Graduate Lecturer teaching Hindi & English at the Mahatma Gandhi-established Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, which was graced previously by my above Masters like Dr. Pandit Sukhlalji, etc.

Here at Gujarat Vidyapith, apart from my duties and activities of teaching, singing and also students'-camps-conducting at times, I had two noteworthy opportunities and experiences during Gandhi Centenary year, 1969 :

(1) To personally join as a Pedestrian, along with my Sitar (just as in my Bhoodan Tours with Vinobaji), the Gujarat Vidyapith organised 241 miles long DANDI PADAYATRA from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi on the 1930 footprints of Mahatma Gandhi. During this re-enactment I had to, apart from singing from place to place, study and collect unrevealed datas of Gandhiji's historic Dandi march to record and write and report the same daily from running tour to the Press, which took form of a series of articles titled "DANDI PATH NE PAGE..PAGE.." published in Jansatta Daily and now being published in a Book form by Gujarat Vidyapith.

(2) To actually work, with great risks involved, as a SHANTI-SAINIK (Peace Soldier), as

demanded by grave circumstances, out of my own heart's inspiration, during the terrible communal riots that gripped Ahmedabad in their clutches in late 1969. Gujarat Vidyapith Chancellor late Hon'ble Shri Morarjibhai Desai had then undertaken Fasts and this humble self along with only a few Sarvodaya-Gandhian Professor-Colleagues like Shri Harish Vyas had dared to move in horrible nights as SHANTI SAINIKS wearing Yellow and Green Scarfs, on Bikes..... There were gruesome Rioters on burning and killing-spree on one side and the firing military personnels on

the other. To move in the backdrops of burnings and bloodsheds and cries from one end of Ahmedabad to the other, was really risky and testing. The Great Souls of Srimad Rajchandraji, Mahatma Gandhiji, Acharya Vinobaji, Dr. Pandit Sukhlalji, etc. directly and indirectly gave us strength, courage and ability to carry on this task fearlessly forgetting our physical self. This was as naturally expected of a SHANTI SAINIK, to establish peace. It was a unique experience.

These two live experiences, in addition to my all other previous backgrounds, gave me more insight and clear picture of non-violent Wars and establishment of Peace through Gandhian concept. This play was written in wake of these events and under the pious shelter of my gracious Master Dr. Pandit Sukhlalji and at Gujarat Vidyapith Library. Thus it has obviously some bearing and live touch of self-acquaintance with the theme.

This resembles somewhat the medieval historical battles of Prithviraj Chauhan against the Moslem Invaders in India which were encouraged and helped by his helping warrior friend, advisor and Events' live recorder Poet Chand Bardai in his biographical Hindi war Epic "PrithviRaj Raso". Here, only a very small participation of the author of these lines in the aforesaid movements and backgrounds justifies the live touch to the subject theme. This practical side superimposes the theoretical side of the previously mentioned background of various struggles and studies, of both Gandhiji and Srimad Rajchandraji throughout. The recent example of this constant study of the latter's genius works by this humble self is the editing, compiling and publishing of SRI ATMASIDDHI SHASHTRA in seven languages, called as "SAPTABHASHI ATMASIDDHI". This was originally inspired by my other gracious Master, Y.Y. Sri SAHAJANAND GHANJI and recently by Great Present day seer and Thinker Sushri Vimala Thakar. The whole editing being in Printing process, the First Copy of this "SAPTABHASHI (Seven Lingual) ATMASIDDHI" was released at Chicago in October 1996 during SRI ATMASIDDHI CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS.

My previously-referred, Literature-Music-Philosophy based nationalist patriotic family had compassionate Jain tradition in its root and origin. It devotedly followed in letter and spirit the principles of Ahimsa (Non-Violence), Anekant (Manysided Point of views) and Aparigraha (Non-accumulation), etc., as preached and prescribed by Tirthankar Bhagawan Mahaveer and Srimad Rajchandraji along with the same modernised and modernity and simplicity laid down by Mahatma Gandhiji in modern times. Thus, whole of my family followed Rajchandra & Gandhi-advocated; Ahimsa. Coincidentally, my birth also took place on Mahaveera's Nirvana Day of Deepavali, in Gandhiji's Birth-month of October and Year of "Dandi"-March 1930 !

My parents cradled me with the philosophies of Srimad Rajchandraji and Mahatma Gandhiji—deeply religious mother through inheritance of Former's SRI ATMA SIDDHI SHASHTRA from very birth, even from before birth and learned writer-musician father through teaching of Srimad Rajchandra's poems and Gandhian Songs. Thereafter this was followed by an important, life-transforming event of father's presenting me Srimad Rajchandra's "MOKSHAMALA" significantly on my 16th Birthday. These childhood impacts of Srimad Rajchandraji coupled with those of Mahatma Gandhiji (who had visited my native place Amreli enroute earlier) as referred from my school days, went on expanding and increasing throughout in course of my studies and previously-referred contacts of the great souls ! My illustrious brothers and lone sister had also naturally the impacts of this background, particularly my younger brother was a revolutionary inmate of Sardar Prithvi Singh at Sathra-Bhavnagar and of Balkobaji Bhave at Nisargopachar Ashram, Uruli Kanchan-Poona and my elder brother was a noble-hearted Philanthropist, Pankaj Mullik-kanan Devi-K.L. Saigal's music Loving fan and Y.Y. Sri Sahajananda Ghanji's disciple heading his aforesaid Srimad Rajchandra Ashram at Hampi, Karnataka as its President.

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lines at one of his important lecture and paper (*L) presented in the presence of distinguished thinkers presided over by Late Acharya Sri Sushil Kumarji at an International Conference on Non-Violence convened by V.H.P. at Penta Hotel, New York, in 1984.

Strange are the ways of destiny and cosmic happenings....! Such a thing - Change of the warrior captain's heart - has actually and really, exactly, happened just some time back. Both the suggestive indications of my above said Paper and this Play have co-incidentally materialised and come into a concrete event, an interesting happening, unconsciously.....!! During my very recent 11th Lectures-Music-Meditation Tour Abroad, I came across in U.S.A a very useful and interesting, thrilling autobiographical Novel : "The Wings of Morning". It is a factual Novel of Self-happening, written by E.Lorenzo, A Cuban Air-Force Captain Pilot, who had dared to deny the disastrous orders of his superiors, even the President, to bombard while on War-running-duty in action. Seeing the innocent children and people playing and relaxing on the Sea Shore of Florida, the cowardly cruel act of bombing them all for no crime of theirs, was questioned by his own awareness-born self-reasoning, moved his compassionate humanitarian heart and spontaneously prevented him from carrying on his Superiors' orders of bombardments.....!!! Involved in this daring act of denial or non-co-operation was the safety of his ownself and that of his small loving family which was naturally left behind in Cuba. He escaped on board with his country's fighter Air Force Plane just like a hijaker, took refuge shelter and asyulam in the U.S.A. by landing & surrendering himself to the welcoming U.S. Army Officers over there and as a result, was obviously served with wireless orders from his Superiors threatening him with dire consequences. Even Cuban President Fidel Castro himself is reported telling and challenging him with these words : as printed on the Title Cover of the said Novel; "IF LORENZO HAD COURAGE TO HIJACK AWAY MY AIR FORCE PLANE, LET HIM HAVE GUTS TO COME BACK AND TAKE HIS FAMILY.....". And lateron, the fighter Hero of this factual drama, planningly and courageously did so also, came in a Plane, daringly lifted his family from Cuba, flew back to U.S.A. and settled over there meeting the Presidential Challenge.....! As reported, he is staying now also in Florida, U.S.A., with his family.

Well, this recent event of Cuban Airforce Captain Hero exactly resembles and as if incarnates the possible foreseen event of the character of the Hero-Major in this play. As we witness in the later part of the play, the Heart-transformed Major of the Star War refuses to bombard and carry on the enemy-nation-destroying orders of his Nation's President. Of course he does this diplomatically, with convincingly acquired consents of his fellow cosmonaut soldiers through reasoned dialogue followed by unanimous denial of bombarding-all in Non-violent Gandhian way, citing the ideal of Gandhi, the Unique Warrior ! What a co-incidence !! What was predictively foreseen and naturally slipped out of the pen of this humble self now in the last decade of this twentieth Century. Such events are yet going to take shape in future if the humanity standing on the threshold of nuclear disasters has to survive. This is going to be possible by uniting Science with Spirituality or Non-violence as foreseen by Gandhiji's right interpreter & heir Acharya Vinobaji. Certainly, mysterious are the ways of such happenings, of Divinity, of Mysticism, of Truth & Non-violence, unseen forces of which are at work unusually in such mysterious, mystical, unpredictable events of Cosmic Order of Destiny

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"THE GREAT WARRIOR OF AHIMSA (MAHATMA GANDHI)
"COULD THERE BE SUCH A WARRIOR ? "

CAST

- * SHRIMAD RAJCHANDRA : MAHATMA GANDHI'S SPIRITUAL GUIDE
- * MAHATMA GANDHI : IN 3 AGE-STAGES : 22, 61, 79
- * SAROJINI NAIDU : POETESS.
- * SONGSTER : BALLAD SINGER
- * DANDI-MARCH PEDESTRIANS : Chiefly: Mahadev Desai, Abbas Taiyabji, Khareji [Musician] and many others
- * BUDDHE BABA : PEACE-SOLDIER, 106 Years Old, bearded, Khaddar Clothed.
- * TWO TIGERS in dream sequence

WESTERN CHARACTERS:

- * MAJOR GENERAL : HERO
- * MARSHAL : His Asstt.
- * FIELD MARSHAL : - do -
- * LIEUTENANT : - do -
- * SOLDIERS [about 24, out of which 6 prominent].
- * SPACE COSMONAUTS

ACT : I

TIME: World War IV : 2048 A.D., One Hundred Years after Mahatma Gandhi's assassination, Month of February. The 1st Scene takes place in the night at about 9-0 p.m.

PLACE & SCENES: Somewhere in the Western Part of the earth: World war's Battle field: Land-fighting spot of the Space War with developed ultramodern scientific weapons. The spot is in a forest having small hillocks in the distant background behind the woods. The scene also includes the ruins of a small church and a building nearby in addition to the destroyed space-weapons and dead and live bodies of some heavily wounded soldiers and other people.

The Scene opens with the touching notes of a song and the entry of an old, white-bearded, Khaddar-clad wounded Indian pedestrian Peace-soldier 'Buddha Baba' with a torch and stick in his hand. He is loaded with a bundle and a bag and a water-bottle on his shoulders and the back. Though old, he is stout, resolute and of loveable personality. His eyes shining, words coming from the depths of Truth, heart full of love and the movements showing eagerness to render services to others even at this age.

The second entry is of the Hero of the Play, the Major General of a greatest existing nation and the celebrated warrior of the former, third World War. Uniformed with several badges, rational, lion-hearted and somewhat cruel Major enters unexpectedly through a space-parachute from which he descends and jumps on the stage without shading light.

The deep back stage provides the arrangements of Cyclorama curtain and other light-techniques for presenting visionary scenes and dream sequence taking place in the second act after the demise of the old Peace soldier.

BACKGROUND EFFECTS: Music-Western Instruments: (Harp, Violin.....), Indian Instruments: (Sitar, Flute, Drums, Trumpets,) Noises and sounds of Thunder, Sea-roaring, Tiger-roaring, Birds, Singing, Bombing, Space Fighting and intermittent shooting and firings... cries of dying women and children and soldiers, etc.

SONGS : Mostly in pieces are Indian (except one English verse). The languages are Sanskrit, Prakrit, Hindi, Gujarati (Mahatma Gandhi's mother tongue) and Bengali (Tagore's mother tongue). Meanings of the songs in these languages are either given in the commentary or are inter-woven in the dialogues. Mostly the songs are used in the form of play-back singing. They are intended to create the impressive background of the theme and the plots.

STAGE-TECHNIQUE APPARATUS: As the time is of 2048 A.D., developed audio-visual and stage-technique apparatus may be utilised and light-effects may be provided. The dream-sequences and visionary scenes are purposeful and symbolic and as such, the stage-technique apparatus should be used in such a way that they may properly help in producing the emotional, imaginative and indicative aspects of the play.

Presentation along with appropriate effects is important throughout the play.

SCENE I

[Stage vacant in the opening.. Darkness followed by dim colorful lights... intermittent noises of one or two remote bombardments.. Piece of a song.. A ballad in 'Gujarati' followed by its commentary in English and then the entry of the Peace Soldier- "Buddhe Baba"- the old man.....]

BACKGROUND SONG (Solo :Male Voice) :

"Bahu dina Ghadi re talwār, Ghadi Kāi Topu ne manavār
Pāncha Sāta Shoorā nā Jaikār Kāj, Khub Khelañā Samhār" (*1)

COMMENTATOR (Male):

"For ages man has remained manufacturing the sword and the canon and the torpedo-bombers and various bombs... and there on the stage of the world, numerous wars have been fought... only for the sake of five or seven chieftains and politicians, yes, only for the sake of five or seven chieftains and politicians.....!"

[Enters Buddhe Baba with wounds and blood on his body and tears in his eyes, indicating the bloodshed and the dead bodies round about and the weapons and the sky above...]

BUDDHE BABA: This ... hatred, this violence, this power-craving, these wars and these weapons !! They are increasing day by day with the passing of the ages.... One.... Two. Three.... The world has witnessed the devastations caused by three world wars in course of time and yet the fourth one ! But what for ? .. Why ? ... Are the three not enough ? Does the world require them any more ? (Pause, Move)... How long these wars continue? how long..?

[Cry of wounded white soldier from a corner where he is dying.]

SOLDIER: "I am dying.....! Amen.....! Water..."

BABA: [Shades light & rushes in the direction of the voice, sits beside the soldier] Oh..... have it my dear boy, have it... [goes near, leans, pours a few drops of water in his mouth, puts his hand with love on his head and the soldier dies....]

SOLDIER: "A..m..é..n..!" [dies.....effect of Violin]

BABA: [Shedding tears on his face and covering his body with a piece of cloth, praying...] May God rest you in eternal peace, my son!....[Pause.... Standing up & loitering] How long these wars... how long...?

[Suffers the pain of his own wounds and places his hand on his chest... unexpectedly lands the Major General from silent Space Parachute direct on the stage, exactly at the end of the Baba's utterance and replies in its context....]

MAJOR GENERAL: till the destruction, total destruction of the enemy of our nation [laughs cruelly...Baba surprised]... but halt, hold on your hands and tell me who are you and why are you here on our secret area of the battlefield ?

BABA : I am here, sir, to ask the chieftains like you (pause).. and I presume, you are... you are

(*1) " GHAN RE BOLE NE....." (Gujarati : JHAVERCHAND MEGHĀNI)

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BABA : At the age of Six when I was moving with my father. He was working with Gandhi in Noakhali, eastern part of India to establish peace and relief in place of horror, hatred and violence. I also had decided and vowed before Gandhi that it would be my life-long mission to follow his path and to go to establish peace wherever there are disturbances and wars. I exactly remember.... [Recollecting deeply and sentimentally] how happily our beloved Bapu had blessed me at that time saying " Live long and be a brave soldier of Peace ".

MAJOR : Is it so ?

BABA : Gandhi, then unfortunately fell a prey to the hatred of our own people. When I grew old, I became a Peace-soldier—a "SHANTI SAINIK" to say in Gandhi's words—. I went on wandering in the war-fields with my mission of peace since then...

MAJOR : [recollecting seriously] Were you present on the western coast of Europe during the Third World War in the last decade of 20th century ?

BABA : Of course, on all war-effected coastal places....

MAJOR : I see... now I remember, my Field Marshal was telling me, probably it was you he was referring to, when I took over from him in 2010 A.D. He was very very impressed by your great adventurous task of saving thousands of children who would not have survived otherwise. [Feels sympathetic and obliged]

BABA : And your Field Marshal and you went on killing thousands and lacs of innocent delicate & newly-born children of your enemy-nations, isn't it ? [Pained mentally also...]

MAJOR : Of course, Baba, I realise and confess that our faults were many....

BABA [feeling deeply annoyed] : Faults ? do you call them faults ? They were sins, such great sins, unparalleled crimes for which neither humanity nor God will ever forgive you !

MAJOR : But after all these are wars.....

BABA : — In which you want your children to be saved and others to be killed....!

MAJOR : We can't help... It's the custom of war...

BABA : I intend to root out that custom by preventing the wars totally, It is the long-cherished and biggest dream of my life. [His pain increases, he lies down, the major helps and sits by his side looking at his wrist watch now and then... ...]

MAJOR :But you can't prevent wars. Wars are inevitable since there are differences and disputes and aggressions and injustice in the world...!

BABA : Gandhi also worked amidst differences and fought against injustices...! He was also a warrior, a lifelong and brave warrior who fought without weapons and that too against a great empire ! ... Mine is the humble effort to walk in his footsteps... I have acted accordingly so far... now... now...

[Pain becomes acute and bleeding starts from his wounds... the Major tries to tie a bandage]

BABA : Don't mind my bleeding, sir... I am a little happy that I could reach and convey my message unto you.... I'll be extremely happy this war is prevented and my dream becomes a reality before I breathe my last..So far as my physical wounds are concerned, I am not

worried at all. Due to God's grace, I have been able to be totally detached from my body now I feel no pain at all.

MAJOR : No pain at all ? How is it ? Don't you feel pain of such grave wounds ?

BABA : No.

Major : It's amazing ! well, You say of Gandhi that he was a warrior, who fought without weapons, but how is it possible ? As a warrior, I know that weaponless war has nowhere been possible so far.

BABA: It can be, It has been. The human history has noted for the first time that Mahatma Gandhi was a warrior who fought without hatred and without violent weapons.

MAJOR : [Looking at his own uniform & badges etc.] A warrior without weapons ! Could there ever be such a warrior ?

[Background effect of remote firing.]

BABA : Yes my dear Major, there could be. Till now we knew that the wars can only be fought with violent weapons. Here is a man who proved it otherwise. His life is a historical proof of this. He used non-violent weapons of truth, love, civil resistance, dis-obedience, etc. in which he shed his own blood inspite of taking it from others....!

MAJOR : Non-violent weapons of truth, love, civil resistance, dis-obedience: how could all these be applicable in field of war & Politics ? These are meant for religious and spiritual people only....!

BABA : Gandhi spiritualised politics. He practically proved that religion and spirituality could go along with War & Politics.

MAJOR : This doesn't seem possible not only in to-day's Planet and Space Age, but also in the Age of Gandhi !.... However, I am interested in knowing how Gandhi implemented these weapons.

BABA : Gandhi's various Civil Resistance Wars in Africa & India, The Historic Dandi March, The 'Quit India' Movement, etc. are the proofs which will speak of his successful usage of these means.....[taking a sigh and feeling a little pain] ...I would have told this to you at length but it seems that my time is up now.... But I present you my property, the valuable property, which will tell you in detail as to how Gandhi was such a successful warrior [He hands him over the bundle containing the Filmstrips, photographs, books on Gandhi and by Gandhi such as " MAHATMA "..... "The Early Phase" "The last Phase" ... "My story of Experiments with Truth" or An Autobiography, "SATYAGRAHA IN SOUTH AFRICA", "Gandhi—the Warrior", "Gandhi—the Truth Seeker", "Gandhi—the Peace Seeker", etc. and Gandhi Films & a loaded Tape Recorder having Gandhi's recorded Life Story and some of the speeches of Gandhi..]

MAJOR : [Receiving the bundle] : Thank you very very much, Baba !

BABA : Mention not, have it and preserve it as my remembrance. This humble present of mine, kept since long in expectance of the right person like you, will tell you everything and inspire you whenever needed.

MAJOR : I am really thankful to you, Baba, for such a valuable present. I won't be able to forget you forever.

BABA: Now I take your leave...[breathing his last very consciously, he being a self-controlled seeker of the soul] ... My dear Major! You are a warrior...May God make you also a really brave warrior-the warrior without violent weapons, even far more advanced than Gandhi...May my dream of preventing these world-destructive wars[..effect of remote bombing] come true through you..This is my deepest prayer to God before I leave this body...May God bless you..Good bye.."Jai Jagat"... "Jai Shanti" [meaning: "Let the whole world be victorious...." "Let Peace be victorious.."]

[Baba dies...the Lion-hearted Major also feels somewhat moved...eyes full of tears for a while...Prays for him silently for half a minute... covers his body and then moves, loiters for some time]

[Background Music : Tragic instruments, Raghupati Raghav Mantra dhoon]

MAJOR : [after loitering and pause, reacting..] Could there be such a warrior ? Should I also become such a warrior?....No...No...I doubt. I must continue and carry out my space war plans-not only for my country's protection and justice but also for establishing world peace...!

[Gets absorbed in deep thinking and loiters speedily, then immediately opens the Bundle and taking out the Tape Recorder first, listens to a recorded speech of Gandhi..the deep powerful base voice of Gandhi effects him...he sits down in thinking mood on the stone near his parachute umbrella]

M.GANDHI'S VOICE :

" I AM A MAN OF PEACE. I BELIEVE IN PEACE, BUT I DO NOT WANT PEACE AT ANY PRICE. I DO NOT WANT THE PEACE THAT YOU FIND IN THE GRAVE, BUT I DO WANT THE PEACE WHICH YOU FIND EMBEDDED IN THE HUMAN BREAST WHICH IS EXPOSED TO THE ARROWS OF THE WHOLE WORLD BUT WHICH IS PROTECTED BY THE POWER OF THE ALMIGHTY GOD..."

[Major picks out a book titled "Gandhi-the Peace Seeker" and again gives an ear to the speech keeping the book in hand]

"EACH ONE HAS TO FIND HIS PEACE ONE'S OWN SELF WITHIN, AND PEACE TO BE REAL MUST BE UNAFFECTED BY OUTSIDE CIRCUMSTANCES". (*2)

[Major stops the Tape Recorder, reads the titles of the Books loudly]

MAJOR : [Holding the books one by one]; The Story of my Experiments with Truth..." ... "Mahatma" : "The last phase.." "Gandhi—the warrior"... "Gandhi—the Revolutionary" "Gandhi—the Truth Seeker"... "Gandhi—the Peace Seeker".....[reacting] Could there be all of these things together-revolution & war & truth & peace...?

[Starts the Tape Recorder, listens one sentence and stops immediately]

M. GANDHI'S VOICE :

"THE WAY OF PEACE IS THE WAY OF TRUTH..." (*3)

MAJOR: [repeating] "The way of Peace is the Way of Truth" [Loiters thinking and looking at the wrist watch...enters Marshal, his subordinate with two armed soldiers and torch in hand to receive the Major who has landed as per their plan through Parachute..

(*2) & (*3) "Gandhi the Truth Seeker" By self

MARSHAL : [Saluting as per military custom] Excuse me sir, if I am late, I doubt whether my watch has betrayed me..

MAJOR : No, No, Marshal ! you are quite in time, I came ahead of our schedule. Well, I shall like to know about the latest developments, if any...

MARSHAL : Nothing particular to mention, sir. I think you should take rest first, we may discuss our plans early in the morning..

MAJOR : Yes, if nothing is serious to attend, I shall of course prefer some rest...

MARSHAL : We shall make a move to our camp then.. every thing is ready, sir.

MAJOR : Yes, come along...[to the soldiers] both of you dig a pit here, put the corpse of that old man [pointing to the dead body of Baba] and then inform me..[to Marshal] just a minute, let us bury this old peace soldier before we move...[both goes near the books & tape recorder and tie them in the bundle..]

MARSHAL : Did you know this old man..?

MAJOR : Yes..he was a seeker and soldier of world peace...

SOLDIERS : Every thing is ready, sir! [Major and Marshal both go there, cover the dead body with earth, pay their silent last homage in prayerful mood and then they all proceed. The soldiers carry the bundle & parachute on their shoulders]

[First Act ends]

ACT : 2

SCENE 1

[The scene shows the Major's camp, of land-fighting spot amidst green trees. It's a tent with woods and hillocks in the background seen from two windows. In the deep back stage is the cyclorama curtain and about two ft. higher is the stage for the dream sequences & visionary scenes. As the time is about eleven in the same night, the darkness and lights are provided in their real and dream scenes as per requirements. Musical and other sound effects are also appropriately provided.

The Major's bed is near the window to enable him to look outside and sleep in such a way that it may coincide with the background sequence. Near his bed lie a lamp and the books and the tape recorder. He is in his-sleeping dress. There are four soldier Guards on duty outside his tent on the other side, other than the one facing the dream sequences. The Marshal is in the adjacent tent only a part of which is seen.

When the curtain opens, the Major is lying and reading one of the books: "Gandhi the Truth Seeker" and looking at the photographs and then outside the windows...dim light of the lamp only...]

[Effect: Instrumental Western Music : Harp...]

MAJOR [Reading the book aloud in the light of the lamp, lying.] :

".....GANDHI WAS OUT AND OUT A TRUTH-SEEKER SINCE HIS EARLY AGE. IN COURSE OF TIME HE CAME ACROSS SOME GREAT SEEKERS OF TRUTH DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY. THESE WERE THOREAU, TOLSTOY, RAJCHANDRA OR POET RAICHANDBHAI AND RUSKIN. OUT OF THESE ALL, SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA WAS THE GREATEST SOURCE OF INSPIRATION AND INFLUENCE WHO LEFT AN EVER-LASTING IMPRESSION ON HIM. HE SOUGHT GUIDANCE

FOR THE SEARCH OF TRUTH AND SELF-REALISATION WHICH SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA PROVIDED INDICATING THE MEANS OF NON-VIOLENCE, TRUTH, LOVE, SELF-CONTROL AND CERTAIN OTHER PRACTICES. ULTIMATELY GANDHI DERIVED HIS PATH OF NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE ON PUBLIC-BASE FROM THESE PRACTICES. HE ADOPTED THE PRACTICE OF NON-VIOLENCE FROM SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA AND RESISTANCE OR FIGHT AGAINST THE INJUSTICES FROM HIS BELOVED BOOK THE "GEETA". THUS THERE GREW A GREAT FORCE OF NON-VIOLENT RESISTENCE OR WAR AND GANDHI APPEARED ON THE STAGE OF THE WORLD IN THE FORM OF A UNIQUE WARRIOR.

" SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA, GANDHI'S SPIRITUAL GUIDE, A POET AND A JEWELLER OF BOMBAY WAS A YOUNG HOUSE-HOLDER AND NOT AN ASCETIC. HOWEVER HE WAS A REALISED SOUL AND HE USED TO PASS MOST OF HIS TIME IN SOLITUDE, CHIEFLY AT IDAR IN GUJARAT. OUT OF THE SIX OR SEVEN HILLS OF THIS PLACE, THERE WAS A SILENT AND SOLITARY HILL CALLED 'GHANTIA PAHAD'. NO HUMAN BEINGS STAYED THERE. ONLY A FEW FIERCE TIGERS USED TO STAY THERE IN THE CAVES BEHIND THE HUGE STONES ...THIS WAS THE PLACE OF THE PRACTICE OF NON-VIOLENCE AND MEDITATION FOR SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA..!..."

[The Major interested, looks at the Photographs of Gandhi and Rajchandra presented by Baba, sleeps...Music and Dream]

[Dream Sequence]

[Indian Instrumental Music: Sitar, in the background, white clouds on the deep back stage where on the stones of the hill is seated Srimad Rajchandra, quite young, 24, cross-legged in lotus posture and close-eyed, deeply absorbed in Meditation. Two fierce Tigers are seated near him dim lights.....]

SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA [after steadily & silently meditating for long— here 2 minutes— opens his eyes and finding the tigers without any fear ~~talks~~ ^(he) to the tigers—]

" IT'S GOOD THAT YOU HAVE COME MY FRIENDS!" [tigers sit as they were] YOU MIGHT BE HUNGRY AND MIGHT BE IN NEED OF THIS MORTAL BODY, AS IT IS YOUR FOOD. YOU MAY HAVE IT IF YOU NEED I DO NOT NEED IT....."

[Tigers uninvolved..he closes his eyes and again gets absorbed in deep Meditation]

[Effect : SITAR]

[After some time appears the face of Gandhi-22 years old-it is shown on the other side and seeing him in meditation, Srimad Rajchandra utters without opening the eyes—]

SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA: [about Gandhi's vision]: "THIS IS THE SOUL I WAS WAITING FOR .."

[Effect : SITAR]

[After some time passes, the tigers roar and gradually disappear. . .Srimad Rajchandra meditates]

MAJOR [reacting in Dream]: Fierce Tigers and hurt this man in meditation, its surprising!

[vision of Srimad Rajchandra disappears, roaring of tigers is again heard and the Major gets up .]

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[Tigers unmove..he closes his eyes and again gets absorbed in deep Meditation]

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[vision of Srimad Rajchandra disappears, roaring of tigers is again heard and the Major gets up .]

"GANDHI THEN WROTE AND SAID.... I HAD GREAT ATTACHMENT FOR HIM AND MY FAITH & DEVOTION IN HIM WERE ALSO LIMITLESS. SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA HAS INFLUENCED AND ORNLIED ME A LOT. HE HAS TAUGHT ME THE RELIGION OF MERCY TO LOVE EVEN THE MURDERER."

"THUS SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA'S LIFE-LONG INFLUENCE ENABLED GANDHI TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT THE CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENCE. HE SYNTHESISED THE IDEALS OF THE GITA OF FIGHTING THE INNER & OUTER EVIL FORCES WITH IT. AND THUS HE DERIVED HIS OWN CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENT WAR OR THE CIVIL-RESISTENCE EXCLUDING THE MEANS OF VIOLENT-WEAPONS FROM THE IDEALS OF THE GITA....

[Sound of the footsteps pacing outside the tent, showing the soldier-Guards, is often heard in between]

"... AND OUT OF THIS CONCEPT, THERE ROSE A GREAT FORCE OF THE TRUTH AND INNER-CONSCIENCE IN GANDHI WHICH SHOOK HIM SAYING-----

".....FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT.....

FIGHT FOR THE DOWN-TRODDENS FIGHT,
FIGHT FOR THE IGNORED ONES FIGHT,
FIGHT FOR THE JUSTICE, LIBERTY & RIGHTS,
FIGHT FOR BRINGING PEACE AND LIGHT.....

".....FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT.....

FIGHT WITHOUT SPREADING HATRED, FIGHT!
FIGHT WITHOUT SHEDING OTHER'S BLOOD, FIGHT!
FIGHT WITHOUT WOUNDING THE ENEMY, FIGHT!
FIGHT WITHOUT VIOLENT-WEAPONS, FIGHT!

".....FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT.....

FIGHT AGAINST INTERNAL VICES, FIGHT!
FIGHT AGAINST EXTERNAL FORCES, FIGHT!

"AND THUS, OUT OF THE TRUTH-SEEKER GREW A WARRIOR IN GANDHI---A WARRIOR WHO FOUGHT WITHOUT USING VIOLENT WEAPONS....."

[Reacting.]--- Who fought without using violent weapons? How could there be such a warrior?

[Effects of Harp and Finings]

A SOLDIER GUARD:[rushing] do you need any thing, sir?

MAJOR :NO [puts the book aside and picks up opening another one; "Gandhi—the Warrior"....the Soldier-Guard watches this and goes away; reads aloud again..]

".....GANDHI WAS THE WORLD'S FIRST 'ANTI-VIOLENCE-WAR WARRIOR' A 'SATYAGRAHI'. HE SHOOK THE GREAT EMPIRE 'WHOSE SUN NEVER USED TO SET ON THE EARTH'. HIS NOVEL FORCE WAS LIKE A GREAT BLOW, LIKE A GREAT BOMB FOR THE BRITISH EMPIRE.....

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SONGSTER : [Presenting a Gujarati 'Doha' of Ballad-form]:

"VAN BHĀLĀ, VAN BARCHHI, VAN TALWĀR, VAN TOP...
TĀRUN KATAK KĀLO KOP, VAN HATHIYARE VĀNIĀ..."

"EK RANUKE RATIO, NE BIJO RANUKE RAM,
SĀBARMATI NO SHYĀM, TEN TO GHELĀ KIDHĀ GĀM..." (*6)

SAROJINI NAIDU: [Bapu Gandhi spinning 'Charkha' at a Marci-Camp on the road] Bapu Gandhi's last weapons were only two: One Charkha, the spinning Wheel the symbol of positive Non-violence and the other, Rama or God or the Truth. The Satyagrahis or the brave warriors having these two weapons had no reason to fail or fear from the so-called 'mighty' but in fact poor, dead inert weapons.....Bapu stressed this at another Dandi March meeting on his way:-

M.GANDHI [Addressing the seated Satyagrahi-fellows and the villagers]: "With faith in the rightousness of his cause and the purity of his weapon a Satyagrahi acts. Where means were clean, there God was undoubtedly present with his blessings. And with the combination of these three, defeat was an impossibility. A Satyagrahi was vanquished only when he chose to ignore truth, non-violence and the inner voice....." [Gandhi & his fellows again begin Marching]

SAROJINI NAIDU :And with these weapons, the warriors led by Bapu-the Great Warrior, reached the Sea Shore of Dandi after 25 days [Gandhi and others under a tree and then at the sea-shore collecting the salt disobeying the act....]and..and there arose a tremendous uproar subduing the roars of the Sea-waves-

GROUP VOICES: " NAMAK KA KANOON TOD DIYA....." [repeated echoes]

SAROJINI NAIDU : The Salt-Act was broken -not only here at Dandi, but all over India, resulting in later imprisonments of Bapu Gandhi and several others. Gandhiji had expected this earlier. Though imprisoned, Gandhi and other leaders set ablaze the fire of non-violent war for Independence [Effect.....Trumpets & Drums: Gandhi behind the Bars. .] But the British Govt. had to release Gandhi and again put him in Jail during the QUIT INDIA movement of 1942, when his slogan was-

M.GANDHI : " DO OR DIE "

GROUP VOICES :- " DO OR DIE " [repeated echoes super imposed]

SAROJINI NAIDU : And ultimately, Bapu, the non-violent warrior-Chieftain became victorious in bringing the independence without shedding blood. He took whatever little achievement he had achieved to be due to the God's grace in the form of his weapons of Truth, Non-violence and inner voice....

[Effect of Sitar..... Bells.....Trumpets: dream scene is over]

MAJOR : [getting up from the dream and bed like lightening] AND AT LAST THE NON-VIOLENT WARRIOR BECAME VICTORIOUS WITHOUT SHEDDING BLOOD!...WHAT A TREMENDOUS FORCE...!! AND THAT TOO OF A NON-VIOLENT WAR.....!! IT'S REALLY ASTONISHING, REALLY MIRACULOUS.....!

[Leifers getting new thoughts and feeling inspired ...now and then looks out of the window at the stars and trees] IF GANDHI COULD REMAIN A TRUTH-SEEKER AND A WARRIOR AS WELL, WHY CAN'T I...? IF BABA TRIED TO PREVENT WARS THE WHOLE OF HIS LIFE, WHY CAN'T I...? AND IF GANDHI'S GUIDE COULD INFLUENCE THE FIERCE TIGERS THROUGH NON-VIOLENCE & LOVE AND IF GANDHI COULD SHAKE THE GREATEST EMPIRE AND ACQUIRE INDEPENDENCE THROUGH NON-VIOLENCE, WHY COULD NOT I DO SO FOR MY COUNTRY, FOR THE SUFFERING HUMANITY, THE WORLD PEACE ?

[Looks out of the window and far away finds the light of a new dawn arising which is symbolic of his new direction ...with the growing of the dawn he gets changed and resolved ...effect of instrumental music: Harp followed by notes of the Flute ...He listens to the notes and looks at the light of the dawn and then—]

I CAN, I CAN, I WILL.. IT WILL BE MY MISSION NOW ONWARDS TO LAUNCH SPACE CAMPAIGNS NOT FOR WARS, BUT FOR WORLD PEACE AS INSPIRED BY GANDHI AND BABA I'LL BECOME A NEW WARRIOR FROM TODAY-A TOTALLY NEW WARRIOR FROM TODAY..."

[He looks at the photos of Rajchandra and Gandhi and arranges the books. Starts the tape-recorder and while listening gets finishing his morning duties.....]

RECORDED MUSIC : RABINDRA SANGEET-TAGORE'S BENGALI SONG:-

"Hirishāy unmatta prithvi, nitta nthura dwanda,
Ghor kutil pantha tār, lobha jatila Bandha...." (*7)

[Recorded commentary] : THE WORLD HAS GONE MAD AND THE MERCILESS WARS ARE IN PROGRESS DAY BY DAY..THE BLOODSHEDS OF THE INNOCENTS FLOW EVERYWHERE... O BUDDHA, THE GOD OF MERCY ! TAKE BIRTH AGAIN AND MAKE THE EARTH SPOTLESS, SINLESS & WORTH-LIVING...[Effect Sitar]...GANDHI UNEXPECTEDLY CAME ACROSS THE STORM OF VIOLENCE & HATRED AND HE SAW THE PAINING BLOODSHEDS WITH THE COMING OF INDEPENDENCE AND HE WENT ON PRAYING IN THESE WORDS TO LORD BUDDHA IN COURSE OF HIS PILGRIMAGE OF PEACE IN NOAKHALI, BENGAL, PUNJAB & DELHI...[Effect: Cries of dying women, children & grown ups... tragic notes of violin..]

INTERNALY HE GOT BROKEN-HEARTED..AND ONE DAY...ON THE EVENING OF 30TH JANUARY, 1948, EXACTLY BEFORE 100 YEARS FROM TO-DAY, [i.e., in 2048 A.D.]. THIS NON-VIOLENT WARRIOR OF TRUTH, LOVE & PEACE, FELL PREY TO THE BULLETS OF ONE OF HIS OWN BROTHEREN.... [Tragic Effects of violin.....] THE LAST WORDS ON HIS LIPS WERE [In voice of Gandhi]: "HE RAM.....HE RAM....." AND THE FEELINGS REGARDING THE MURDERER IN HIS HEART WERE RESEMBLING HIS GUIDE'S TEACHINGS: [Gandhi's voice]: "HE HAS TAUGHT ME THE RELIGION OF MERCY TO LOVE EVEN THE MURDERER....!" (*8)

(*7) Rabindranath Tagore : "Geet-Panchashati"

(*8) How exactly this became true about which Gandhiji himself, as if foreseeingly forecasted to Lady Mountbatten who had congratulated him on being saved in a bomb explosion in one of his last days' prayer meeting just somedays before he being hit by Godse's Bullet, "I CAN ONLY BE CONSIDERED FIT FOR YOUR CONGRATULATIONS WHEN 'RAM-NAM' IS ON MY LIPS WHEN A BULLET HITS ME IN THE CHEST AND I HAVE LOVE FOR ONE WHO HAS KILLED ME".

What a compassionate Great Heart ! Could there be such a forgiving Non-violent warrior, who could put the teachings of his Guide into action in Letter & Spirit, showing mercy upon his murderer also? [Based on reference in "GANDHI FOR THE NEW GENERATION"; GUNVANT SHAH, P.P.58]

[Lovers getting new thoughts and feeling inspired ... now and then looks out of the window at the stars and trees] IF GANDHI COULD REMAIN A TRUTH-SEEKER AND A WARRIOR AS WELL, WHY CAN'T I ... ? IF BABA TRIED TO PREVENT WARS THE WHOLE OF HIS LIFE, WHY CAN'T I ? ... AND IF GANDHI'S GUIDE COULD INFLUENCE THE FIERCE TIGERS THROUGH NON-VIOLENCE & LOVE AND IF GANDHI COULD SHAKE THE GREATEST EMPIRE AND ACQUIRE INDEPENDENCE THROUGH NON-VIOLENCE, WHY COULD NOT I DO SO FOR MY COUNTRY, FOR THE SUFFERING HUMANITY, THE WORLD PEACE ?

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MARSHAL : Shall we come in, sir?

MAJOR : [Without looking at them] Yes, you may.

MARSHAL : [In hurry] There is an important message about our great space war installations sir!

MAJOR : [with totally different attitude] THERE CAN BE NEITHER ANY MESSAGE, NOR ANY WAR GREATER THAN THAT OF GANDHI'S.....

MARSHAL : [surprised.... after some pause] But sir..... our war..... the space war is entirely different.....and at this juncture--

FIELD MARSHAL : Yes sir, at this juncture we are in great hurry...our delay will prove to be dangerous.....

MAJOR : We will have to think seriously before we take the final step.....

FIELD MARSHAL : Sir, why should we loose such a rare opportunity ? Especially when we have got sure chances and when everything is ready as per your plan ?

MARSHAL : Yes sir, every inch of our enemy's soil will be destroyed for ever as soon as our nuclear weapons are on the planets as per the plan...so we are waiting for your final order and also for the consent in reference to our newly acquired message..

WEAPON OPERATING SOLDIER : Yes Sir, everything is O.K. Our scheduled time is also nearing.....are we permitted to begin ?

MAJOR : [resolute] No, my order as well as request is to postpone it..

[all are shocked...]

MARSHAL : Postpone it? But....Sir.....

MAJOR : No, my dear Marshal ! My mind as well as my plans have been changed....Our proud scientific space achievements are not for the destruction of the earth or planets. They are for construction, creation and co-existence ! We have to make this beautiful world worth living!!...We have to utilise and unite science with Nonviolence and Self-knowledge. Here lies our greatest skill.....

MARSHAL : But sir, can't we do all these things later on, after establishing our authority and superiority and after taking the revenge of last world war by finishing our enemies ?

MAJOR : No, my friends...enmities are not appeased through enmity at any time, they are only appeased through non-enmity... because there is no end to enmity and after all, some one will have to begin in the direction of non-enmity by taking a lead !

FIELD MARSHAL : But then, sir, we shall be losing this golden opportunity of unforeseen victory and glory for our country, for you and for us....so at least for this time we should carry on our programme and fight..

MAJOR : Yes, but in a different way; through the way of non-violent fight ..moreover, our country is not different or isolated from the rest of the world, especially in this age....

MARSHAL : You talk of Non-violent fight ?

FIELD MARSHAL : Is it possible and practicable, sir ?

MAJOR : Yes, it is. I have not the least doubt about it. I have come to know from that old Sage and from these Books and Speeches presented by him [pointing to the books, etc.] that the force of Non-violence has created wonders. I am now convinced that it can work much more effectively if we follow it.

Non-violence and love of Gandhi's Guide and other Indian seers could influence and control even wild beasts like tigers and could make them friends[all become interested and curious]

Non-violent war of Gandhi could successfully achieve independence of his country.

Non-violent efforts and practices of the Gramdan Movement, launched by Gandhi's heir Vinoba, could bring bloodless revolution in economic and social fields of Free India...

Non-violent Peace-March of Martin Luther King could create an atmosphere of sympathy in America...[all getting surprised]

Non-violent resistance of czech youths against the crazy and aggressive troops of Russia could compell them for their return....

[Marshal & F.Marshal: 'Was it so ? ...wonderful !']

And lastly, the Non-violent Peace Force called "Shanti Sena" could save India from the aggressors and could convert them during the Third World War in the last decade of 20th Century. I have witnessed this with my own eyes. The history also has recorded all of these unusual events.....

Now you may think whether this is possible and practicable or not?

[All are happy to know this and are nearly convinced]

MARSHAL : Really, it's wonderful, we never knew about this at all....

FIELD MARSHAL : It's very much inspiring, worth-thinking and even worth-adopting, but one doubt remains that how could this be possible on Military and our Space War ground ?

MAJOR : It could be if we have a will. If Gandhi could free his country and shake the greatest empire of his time through non-violent war, why can't we save our country and humanity from this all-destructive war?

[Marshal & F.Marshal both agreeable]

A SOLDIER-OPERATOR : Excuse me sir, I humbly raise similar doubt if you permit me sir... how can we imply these out-of-date and utopian means of Gandhi and his time in our to-day's far more advanced age of Space War?

MAJOR : Why not ? Why the wars with hatred and terrific violence? Could there be no wars without them ? Could we not do it by converting our "Space Force" into a "Peace"

"force"? If Peace and prosperity and brotherhood is our aim, how can we achieve it with violent weapons and impure means? Gandhi has rightly said that ENDS AND MEANS BOTH SHOULD BE PURE. He himself proved this through his novel war. He was a wonderful warrior...!"

SOLDIER-OPERATOR : HOW COULD THERE BE SUCH A WARRIOR ?

MAJOR : There could be... and History tells us that there had been!.... I was also puzzled over the same question till now... but now I have realised that Gandhi definitely was such a warrior and we also can be such warriors...!

[unexpectedly there is a wireless call ... the Major's personal asstt. Soldier on duty receives it and passes it on to the Major]

SOLDIER A : Sir, there's a very urgent call for you from the President... kindly... [Major handles it, all are conscious ...]

VOICE OF THE PRESIDENT [On the Wireless Phone]:

Hello, Good Morning. This is No. 10 speaking... yes... I shall like to know whether our space force's programme has started as per our schedule or not?

MAJOR : No, sir, Not yet....

PRESIDENT'S VOICE : Why? It's high time, major! Please start Space Bombing without any delay....

MAJOR : I very humbly regret, sir, that our plans have totally been changed! [Marshal and others under suspense..]

PRESIDENT'S VOICE : [shocked and astonished] Changed? What do you say?

MAJOR : [firmly] We will have to think of its consequences very minutely and carefully.... Do you believe, sir, that our country, our soldiers, and also we all will be saved once this earth-destroying Space-bombing starts?

PRESIDENT'S VOICE : [Puzzled but without thinking, hurriedly] We can't wait to think these all now at the eleventh hour of this opportunity of our apparent victory....we can't wait for thinking any more...

MAJOR : [With confidence] Let me mention here sir, the courage and readiness to think particularly at this juncture is a more profitable opportunity...I can assure your honour that our new plan will bring a glorious victory, we have never dreamt before... permit me some time for it, sir!

PRESIDENT'S VOICE : [Convinced a little]... All right, let me know at your earliest... but I hope you are conscious of your responsibilities.

MAJOR : Of course, you need not remind me of it, sir. Thank you.

PRESIDENT'S VOICE : O.K. Good bye...

MAJOR : [Handing over the receiver to his asstt. to the Marshal and Field Marshal] Both of you please (X)

go personally and immediately arrange for a meeting at my tent calling all of our remaining soldiers of our space and ground forces except the guards on the crafts...hurry up.....
MARSHAL & FIELD MARSHAL : [Saluting] All right, sir, we're just arranging..[both exit ..some outside soldiers also follow them]
[The Major paces there deeply thinking]

[—the scene ends—]

SCENE 2

[Place the same tent of the Major which is totally vacated except some folding chairs and a stool on which the books and the tape-recorder are lying....the photographs of Gandhi, etc. presented by Baba are hanged.....marshal, F. Marshal, Space Force Soldiers and Officers.....all enter with Military respects and take their seats....The Major is in the Chair.]

MARSHAL : While welcoming all of you for an immediate meeting I have to inform you that our respected Major General has much more important changes to discuss with you all....We were just now discussing some of the aspects of the same and we are very much impressed and nearly convinced. I shall request the respected Major to proceed further.....

MAJOR : Good Morning to all.....You have all cooperated with me so far quite satisfactorily. To-day I seek your co-operation in my changed plan, which not only will prove profitable for our country, but also for the humanity at large..I was just talking about it with these colleagues and also with our President who has so kindly agreed to think over it.

To tell in short, I came across an old Peace Soldier from Gandhi's land yesterday who expired here last night.....

LIEUTENANT : The Peace soldier from Gandhi's land.....?

A SPACE SOLDIER : Was he a bearded old man ?

MAJOR : Exactly, exactly His message at the time of his death in my presence and thereafter this present of books and recorder containing the speeches of Gandhi deeply moved me and changed me [Effect..Harp...]

SPACE SOLDIER : Changed ?

LIEUTENANT : A World-war Hero like you changed ?

SPACE-SOLDIER : How could it become possible for the iron-hearted and intellectually giant warrior like you ?

MAJOR : The inspiration of a great warrior has made it possible.

LIEUTENANT : Who was that warrior ?

MAJOR : [Showing Photo and the book; "Gandhi-the warrior"] Gandhi-whose way of non-violent war will be triumphant for the ages to come-- even far more effectively in this space age.....

[All surprisingly reacting : "Gandhi-the warrior"]

MARSHAL : We are convinced here, sir, but the question is How Gandhi's way could be applicable to us, especially to our Space War ? We follow that we should not continue it for taking revenge but for the prosperity, peace, happiness and preventing aggressions, shouldn't we have it ?

MAJOR : Do other countries want the same thing or not ?

MARSHAL : Of course.

MAJOR : Then where does the conflict remain ? If we want these things, we can't and shouldn't come in others' ways who also want the same! And if we follow this, hardly other countries will dare to make an aggression and even if they do, our Peace Force will definitely defeat them.....the first thing is we must have the courage and confidence. I have talked these matters in detail with the Marshal and others.....

These books and speeches of Gandhi also will be very much useful for us. I therefore show the only remedy for us to convert our Forces into Peace Forces and to launch novel programmes which will be ready in details in course of time.

FIELD MARSHAL : This is worth-adopting sir....We are really fortunate to have such a way.....

MAJOR : But I shall like to know whether all of you like to agree with this idea first of all ?

MARSHAL & OTHERS : We totally agree with you, sir...

SPACE SOLDIER & OTHERS: We all stand by you and your plans, sir.

MAJOR : I am really very very happy to know this decision. We take a pledge to-day to coordinate Non-violence with our Scientific weapons and war and we convert our Force into the Peace Force.., agreed ?

ALL : Agreed.

MAJOR : Then from to-day, from the DEATH-CENTENARY, YEAR OF GANDHI we convert and declare ourselves to be the Soldiers of Peace. We shall remain conscious of each and every action of ours, will strictly follow Truth and Non-violence, will regard the whole universe as our home. And if at all others invade us, we shall launch the non-violent war from land as well as space. We shall go resisting everywhere and will peacefully lay down our lives first till peace is restored.

ALL : We agree.

MAJOR : Then please repeat with me the slogan of that old Peace Soldier who died here-

JAI JAGAT ..JAI SHANTI .. [Effect: Harp..]

Let the world be victorious, let peace be victorious ..[Effect: Harp]

[All repeat the same]

MAJOR [To Marshal] : Congratulations. It is good that God's grace has guided us at the right moment. Otherwise we would have progressed towards destruction. Now you convey the decision of our converted Peace Force to our President with all respect.....

MARSHAL : Yes sir [goes with soldier, sends a call from outside and returns after some time with message.....in the meantime the Major makes all listen a speech of Gandhi from the recorder] .

MARSHAL : Sir, the shocked President only uttered about all of us that "COULD THERE BE SUCH WARRIORS" ?

ALL : We also had asked our Major [all smiling] "COULD THERE BE SUCH A WARRIOR" ?

MAJOR : [Smiling with cheers] And I also had asked Baba, the Peace Soldier, and also the soul of Gandhi-who has replied me positively-that "COULD THERE BE SUCH A WARRIOR ?"

[SIMULTANEOUS IMPRESSIVE EFFECTS ON THE BACKDROP OF CYCLORAMA CURTAIN AND BACKGROUND MUSIC & PEACE MARCH SONGS]

B.G. SONG : "Shānti Ke Sipāhi Chale, Shānti Ke Sipāhi, (2)

(1:Hindi) Le Ke Khairkhwāhi Chale, Rokne Tabāhi Chale;
Shānti Ke Sipāhi Chale, Shānti Ke Sipāhi (2).....
Ahimsā Ko Ubarne, Vishwa ko Uddhärne,
Shānti Ke Sipāhi Chale, Shānti Ke Sipāhi (2).....
Prem Pravāh Chal Padā, Karunā Kā Sāgar Umdā,
Shānti Ke Sipāhi Chale, Shānti Ke Sipāhi (2)....." (*11)

[Instrumental Peace March Music]

B.G. SONG :

(2 :English) FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT.....

Fight Against Internal Vices, Fight !
Fight Against External Forces, Fight !
Fight Without Spreading Hatred, Fight !
Fight Without shedding other's blood, Fight !
Fight without wounding the enemy, Fight !
Fight without violent weapons, Fight!
Fight for Bringing Peace and Light !
Fight for Beautifying Universal Sight!

B.G. SONG :

(3 :Hindi: Repeat 2 Lines only)

Shānti Ke Sipāhi Chale, Shānti Ke Sipāhi.....
Ahimsā Ko Ubarne, Vishwa Ko Uddhärne,

Fight, Fight, Fight.....
MARCH, MARCH, MARCH.....

(*11) "DUKHAYAL" :Dharati Ke Geet

Simultaneously with the Major's leading of slogan JAI JAGAT-JAI SHANTI and all repeating the same, the above Peace March Songs commence on one hand and the transformed Space Soldiers into PEACE SOLDIERS wearing YELLOW SCARFS on their heads with the same dress, begin their March headed by their Chief, MAJOR, wearing a GREEN SCARF, posing in Symbolic Double Role, on the other. They March from one end of the back stage to the other, say from left to right, where, on the Upper Corner of the Cyclorama Curtain are two silhouette cut pictures or poses : First of Warrior Gandhi marching with his usual stick and Second of Srimad Rajchandra seated in PADMASANA-the Lotus Posture, near to it Gandhi also comes and sits down in his usual PRARTHANA-the Prayer Posture. All of these scenes and songs in the background are to be woven skilfully. These background effects should not overlap or suppress the important Dialogues going on the outer stage. The whole End should be of everlasting impact, bringing Glory to Peace, Non-Violence, Universal Brotherhood and Joy. It should convey and highlight these ideals, especially the WAR & WARRIOR RESULTING INTO PEACE AND WARRIORS OF PEACE : along with others' and the Major's ending words of "COULD THERE BE SUCH A WARRIOR?", therefore, there should simultaneously go on the Peace March Songs as above and all ending into the following Shanti-Mantra Echoes:

B.G. SONG : CHANTING :

(4:Sanskrit) : "SHĀNTIM SHARANAM GACHHĀMI " (Echoes) (All voices repeat)

Echoing Commentary : WE DEDICATE OURSELVES TO PEACE.....

B.G. SONG : CHANTING :

(5: Sanskrit) : "SHIVAMASTU SARVA JAGATAH" (Echoes) OM SHANTI . (3)

Echoing Commentary : LET THE WHOLE UNIVERSE ATTAIN PEACE & WELFARE.

PEACE ...PEACE.....PEACE.....

WITH THESE BACKGROUND IMPROVISATIONS GOING ON SIMULTANEOUSLY THE PLAY ENDS).

[The curtain drops]

The End

Hindi firsty
(Written in Hindi at Ahmedabad, Gujarat at Gujarat Vidyapith Ahmedabad (India) at the feet of Great Gandhian Jain Scholar Padmabhooshan, Pragyachakshu Dr. PANDIT SUKHLALJI, D.Litt.)

APPENDIX - A

SRIMAD RAJCHANDRAJI

MAHATMA GANDHIJI'S SPIRITUAL GUIDE

There in the solitary caves of ancient seekers' abode Idar in Gujarat, remained deeply absorbed in his Meditations and Self-Realisation, forgetting his Physical entity, a very great but much hidden, very much unassuming and very much publicity-evading soul, just a century before.

He used to run his practical business of Jewellery at Bombay just to fulfill his worldly obligations and duties, but most of his time passed in solitudes at Idar and other lonely places. He transformed his realisations and the spirit of Ahimsa and Anekanta into every inch of his living practice.

He was the great and unique modern Jain Seer of this age SRIMAD RAJCHANDRAJI, the spiritual Guide of MAHATMA GANDHIJI, the unequalled present path-seeker of salvation, who was living only for Self-Realisation as Gandhiji himself wrote about him in his Autobiography :

"He was a man of great character and learning. He was also known as a 'SHATAVADHANI'. The thing that did cast its spell over me I came to know afterwards. This was his wide knowledge of scriptures, his spotless character and his burning passion for Self-Realisation. I saw later that this was the only thing for which he lived."

[—"The Story of my Experiments with Truth"; Part II, chapter 1, pp.112-13]

Gandhiji was so much impressed by him that as he himself said, he did not find any religious person of Srimad Rajchandra's status in the current times in India. He himself learnt the first lesson of Ahimsa, Compassion & Mercy from him. On one occasion of Srimad Rājchandaji's Jayanti at Ahmedabad, Gandhiji publically paid tribute to Srimadji's greatness in these words:

"For several years, I have been in search of a religious man in India, but I have so far not come across any person who could compete with Srimad Rājchandrabhāī. He mostly used to say that he did not belong to any sect or tradition or fragment, nor did he intend to limit himself to them. These are all sub-religions, the "limited" ones, while religion is 'Infinite' or 'limitless', which cannot be defined at all!".

Srimad Rajchandraji played a very great role in guiding and stabilizing Gandhiji, the then Barrister M.K. Gandhi, in his early days in East Africa, into his own fold and faith of Hinduism. Influenced and encircled by the Clergymen in Africa, the Barrister's foundation of his own faith was shaken, he had become wavering and was even going to be converted into Christianity. He wrote at length to Srimad Rajchandraji at Bombay. The Postal Discussions went on. Srimadji sent him not the books of Jainism but Gandhiji's own Hinduism such as BHAGVADGITĀ, YOGVASISTHA MAHĀ RĀMĀYANA, PANCHADASHI, etc. and replied with analytic depth and logic, Gandhiji's important questions and doubts. These have come out in a booklet form in Gujarati and now in English.

It was again the impartial greatness of Srimadji that he did not advise or even indicate Gandhiji to convert into Jainism, but Gandhiji himself got influenced at his hands into the main spirit of AHIMSA—the heart of Jainism.
Impartial Srimadji wrote to Gandhiji :

"I do not have any partiality, whatever religion you belong to. I only wish that you should follow such a religion, such a code of conduct, such a devotion that may lead you to eradicate the blemishes of worldly life.....!"

Such letters and other are the treasure and testimony of the Unique greatness, secular spirit and religious generosity and tolerance of Srimad Rājchandraji.

Mahātmā Gāndhiji's Spiritual Heir and Great Secular Scholar and Initiator of Sarvodaya-Bhoodan Movement Āchārya VINOBĀ BHĀVE has paid glowing tribute to this unparalleled greatness of Srimad Rājchandraji in one of his Marāthi Letters dated 17-11-1935, written from Pavnār near Wardhā. He has written :

"Rājchandbhāi became instrumental in strengthening Bāpu (Gāndhiji)'s faith in Hinduism—this, a service which had naturally taken shape at his hands but from the view point of public, was his best act. In my opinion, his superb service is to manifest in himself, a burning zeal for Self-Realisation".

GĀNDHIJI'S FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH RĀJCHANDRAJI

Before going in depth about Gandhiji's various impressions and writings or speeches on Srimad Rājchandraji who strengthened his faith in his own fold of Hinduism, it will be interesting and useful to have a glimpse of Gandhiji's first and primary acquaintances with Srimadji.

It was the month of July in 1891 A.D., one-Hundred years before. Gāndhiji, the then Barrister M.K. Gāndhi, had returned from England after his studies in Law. He had put up with Dr. Prānjivandās Mehtā at Bombay, whose niece was married to Rājchandraji, then known as Poet Rāychandbhāi. Dr. Mehtā was the person to introduce Rajchandraji saying about him:

"Inspite of being a poet he is associated with us in Business. He is a very knowledgeable person, a Gyāni, a Shatāvadhāni [one who is capable of attending to one hundred things at a time and recollecting the same in order]."

Someone suggested to Gāndhiji at that time that "Why don't you narrate a few words to Rāychandbhāi ? He will repeat them in the same order irrespective of whatsoever language".

Gāndhiji, astonished at listening this, narrates the incidence clarifying his own condition of that time :-

"Young man was I, returned from England, showy of my knowledge of Language, no less was the influence of the west upon me. Returned from Abroad means descended from Heaven ! I made a big show of expressing the whole of my knowledge and first of all I wrote down words of different languages—because where was I capable to hold that order in my memory ? I read out those words thereafter. What a surprise that Raychandhai slowly and smoothly repeated all these words in the same order ! I was pleased, greatly astonished and cultivated my high opinion about the Memory Power of the Poet. This experience should be good enough to calm down my pride of the Western influence....."

Gandhiji was so much impressed at this very first acquaintance by Rājchandraji that he felt such a Memory, such a knowledge and that too of a not much school-education possessing and a little elder to him (just by one year and ten months) person was rare. Even he was so much respected without going out of India. This thing made Gāndhiji to realise that one need not go abroad to gather respect and memory could not be purchased from the school and so also the knowledge !

As mentioned previously, Gāndhiji was impressed not only by this memory power and knowledge of Rajchandraji, but by his "SPOTLESS CHARACTER AND HIS BURNING PASSION FOR SELF REALISATION" also about which he came to know after coming in more contacts with him, after the above mentioned first acquaintance.

Truth-seeker Gandhiji frankly writes about his own inner condition of that time:

"My spiritual state was that of a knowledge-seeker (JIGYĀSU) only when we met first. There remained doubts in mind about several questions I had a little knowledge about Religion, Hinduism, Geetā etc. at that time. I am not talking here of whatever I had acquired from my parents. It was not so that had I known much about religion through my own efforts. But I used to have eagerness to know about religion. Hence I liked the acquaintance of Rāychandbhāī and I got influenced by his words."

Gāndhiji records on page 113-114, in his autobiography, "The story of my Experiments with Truth", also :-

"Rāychandbhāī's commercial transactions covered hundreds of thousands. He was a connoisseur of pearls and diamonds. No knotty business problem was too difficult for him. But all these things were not the centre around which his life revolved. That centre was the passion to see God face to face. Amongst the things on his business table there were invariably to be found some religious book and his diary. The moment he finished his business he opened the religious book or the diary. The man who, immediately on finishing his talk about weighty business transactions, began to write about the hidden things of the spirit could evidently not be a businessman at all, but a real seeker after Truth. And I saw him thus absorbed in godly pursuits in the midst of business, not once or twice, but very often. I never saw him lose his state of equipoise. There was no business or other selfish tie that bound him to me, and yet I enjoyed the closest association with him. I was but a briefless barrister then, and yet whenever I saw him he would engage me in conversation of a seriously religious nature. Though I was then groping and could not be said to have any serious interest in religious discussions, still I found his talk of absorbing interest. I HAVE SINCE MET MANY A RELIGIOUS LEADER OR TEACHER. I HAVE TRIED TO MEET THE HEADS OF VARIOUS FAITHS, AND I MUST SAY THAT NO ONE ELSE HAS EVER MADE ON ME THE IMPRESSION THAT RAYCHANDBHAI DID. HIS WORDS WENT STRAIGHT HOME TO ME. HIS INTELLECT COMPELLED AS GREAT A REGARD FROM ME AS HIS MORAL EARNESTNESS; AND DEEP DOWN IN ME WAS THE CONVICTION THAT HE WOULD NEVER WILLINGLY LEAD ME ASTRAY AND WOULD ALWAYS CONFIDE TO ME HIS INNERMOST THOUGHTS. IN MY MOMENTS OF SPIRITUAL CRISIS, THEREFORE, HE WAS MY REFUGE."

"Though I could not place Raychandbhai on the throne of my heart as Guru, we shall see he was, on many occasions, my guide and helper.....".

GANDHIJI ON DIFFERENT OCCASIONS ABOUT RAJCHANDRAJI

[only a few extracts out of many]

*** IN ONE OF HIS LETTERS ABOUT BODY & SOUL :**

"The body should not be dearer than the soul. He who knows the soul, and also knows that it is different from the body, will not try to protect his body by committing violence. All this is very difficult indeed; but he who has imbibed very noble ideas easily understands it and acts accordingly. The belief that the soul can do good or evil only when it is encased in a body is quite mistaken and terrible sins have been and are being committed owing to it.

There is no such law that the soul can be known only at an advanced age. Many old men pass away without knowing the soul, while PERSONS LIKE THE LATE RĀJCHANDBHAI HAVE BEEN ABLE TO REALIZE THE SELF EVEN AT THE AGE OF 8 (EIGHT !)....."

(The COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI - Vol.IX,p.418, 17-9-1908)

*AT RAJCHANDRA JAYANTI, WADHWAN, SAURASHTRA-GUJARAT :

"Srimad Rājchandra's impact has mainly influenced my life. Srimad Rājchandra has left deeper impressions on me even more than Mahātmā Tolstoy and Ruskin."

(Translated from the opening pages of "CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN MAHATMA GANDHI & SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA" in Gujarati, Published by Srimad Rajchandra Gyan Pracharak Trust, Raj Bhuvan, Near Hathibhai's Wadi, Delhi Gate, Ahmedabad.)

* AT RAJCHANDRA JAYANTI, AMHEDABAD, GUJARAT :

" I cannot describe the everlasting impact of Srimad Rājchandra Bhai that has been established on my life. I have deeper thoughts about him. FOR SEVERAL YEARS, I have been IN SEARCH OF A RELIGIOUS MAN IN INDIA, BUT I HAVE SO FAR NOT COME ACROSS ANY PERSON WHO COULD COMPETE WITH SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA BHAI. There were knowledge, detachment and devotion in him and not the hypocrisy, partiality or attachment-hatred. He had such a greatly unusual power in him through which he was able to derive perfect benefits out of the available opportunity. His writings are much more intelligible, emotional and Self-illuminating even than those of the British Philosophers. I place Tolstoy in first category and Ruskin in the second amongst the European Philosophers. But far more than these two was the state of Experience of Srimad Rājchandra Bhai. You will have very good impact on your life, if, during your free time at your disposal, you read the writings of life of this Great man. HE MOSTLY USED TO SAY THAT HE DID NOT BELONG TO ANY SECT OR TRADITION OR FRAGMENT, NOR DID HE INTEND TO LIMIT HIMSELF TO THEM. THESE ARE ALL SUB-RELIGIONS, THE 'LIMITED' ONES, WHILE RELIGION IS 'INFINITE' OR 'LIMITLESS', WHICH CANNOT BE DEFINED AT ALL! He will immediately pick up a book on completing his Jewellery Business transaction. He had such a strength in him that he could have become a good Barrister, bright Judge or even Viceroy, had he desired to be so. This is no exaggeration, but his impression on my mind. His sharp intelligence left his everlasting impression on others."

(Translated from Gujarati:IBID)

(Narration and Translation By Prof. Pratapkumar J. Toliya)

APPENDIX - B

SRIMAD RAJCHANDRAJI'S GREAT WORK

SRI ATMASIDDHI SHASHTRA

OBJECT :

While sending one copy of the ATMASIDDHI to SHRI LĀGHURAJJI MAHĀRĀJ in addition to SHRI SOBHĀG BHAI, the author SRIMAD RĀJCHANDRAJI had himself specified the object of the ATMASIDDHI in these words :

"THE SOUL IS DIMINISHED DOWN FOR INFINITE TIMES FOR SAKE OF THE BODY !
NOW

NB-12 IF THE BODY IS REDUCED AND DIMINISHED EVEN FOR ONCE, IT WILL REPAY FOR SEVERAL BIRTHS OF SELF-DESTRUCTION AND DIMINISHINGS....."

REFLECTIONS :

"Based on 'ATMA PRAVADA', the 7th of the 14 POORVAS (The Great Jain Master-Scriptures), the ATMASIDDHI deals with the Existence, Form, Nature, Quality of Doer, Quality of Enjoyer and Liberation of the Soul."

"ATMASIDDHI IS THE ESSENCE OF FOURTEEN POORVAS."

—PRABHUSHRI LAGHURAJJI.

"ATMASIDDHI IS THE SUPREME GOLDEN SUMMIT OF PHILOSOPHY AND SELF-KNOWLEDGE. LET THE VEILED & CLOUDED SUN IN FORM OF SRIMAD RAJCHANDRAJI COME OUT, SHINE AND SPREAD ITS SOOTHING, SUBLIMING RAYS ALL OVER, WHICH IS SELF-ILLUMINARY, BUT HAS BEEN UNKNOWINGLY KEPT HIDDEN AND SUPPRESSED BEHIND THE ARTIFICIAL CLOUDS OF THE BARRIERS OF LANGUAGES, ISMS, SECTS AND FRAGMENTS."

—SRI SAHAJANANDAGHANJI.

"ATMASIDDHI IS THE ATMOPANISHADA OF SRIMAD RAJCHANDRA.....XXXX.....

OUR HEAD NATURALLY BOWS DOWN TO GUJARAT'S-INDIA'S CULTURE TO PRODUCE THE GIVER OF SUCH A CREATION.....!"

—DR. PANDIT SUKHLALJI.

"ATMASIDDHI—immortal work expressive of infinite powers of the SOUL !"

—HOLY MOTHER OF HAMPI ATMAGYA MATAJI.

"I STRONGLY RECOMMEND A SERIOUS STUDY OF THIS JEWEL OF A BOOK TO EVERY GENUINE SADHAKA. THE WORDS OF SRI RAJCHANDRA ARE CHARGED WITH THE VIBRATIONS OF SUPREME INTELLIGENCE. HE IS ALIVE IN EVERY VERSE OF ATMA SIDDHI."

—VIDUSHI SUSHRI VIMALA THAKAR.

[SOURCES & REFERENCES : VARIOUS TEXTS, LETTERS, JACKETS OF VARDHAMAN BHARATI and "SAPTABHASHI ATMASIDDHI" edited by the Playwright.]

~~HERE IS THE GREAT WARRIOR OF AHIMSA (C.M.G.)~~
COULD THERE BE SUCH A WARRIOR ? (A play) On MAHATMA GANDHI's Mission of AHIMSA-Non Violence and SHANTI-Peace, inspired by SRIMAD RAJCHANDRAJI, his Spiritual Guide; with the glimpses of latter's events and background By PROF. PRATAPKUMAR J. TOLIYA, disciple of Padmabhooshan Pragyachakshu Dr. PANDIT SUKHLALJI, D.Litt.; With a foreword by

Index : ISBN
~~HERE IS THE GREAT WARRIOR OF AHIMSA (C.M.G.)~~
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BAHUBALI DARSHAN

(Audio/Video CD : Hindi / Kannada/ English/Gujarati/Marathi/Bangla)

Bahubali Darshan is a glimpse of prime occasion of Bahubali's sacrificing life, his non-violent war with elder brother Bharat Chakravarti, both being luminous eldest sons of Bhagwan Rishabhdev. The latter, called as Adinath also, was the first Jain Tirthankara of the Avasarpini Yuga and Pioneer Founder of the organised Human Culture of earth, who taught All Arts and Life Sciences to his people.

The story commences with the Message from elder brother King Bharat to Bahubali to accept his authority under the CHAKRA, Bhaubali had love and respect for elder brother, but as a Self-respectful and independent ruler of his kingdom of Pdanpur (Takshashila), he didn't oblige Bharat. So no compromise, hence war was the only alternative. It was decided to be a Non-Violent struggle for power between the two kings, avoiding bloodshed of anykind. The suggested three fold trial of his strength through DRISHTI-JALA-MALLA YUDDHAS leads Bahubali to Victory, but Great & Compassionate Bhaubali renounces the whole Kingdom and follows the path of Meditation and Liberation, i.e. MOKSHA by attaining the KEVAL JNANA.

This whole story, being the historical fact, is narrated here with a message of Non-violence, which was adopted in different context in Modern Times by Mahatma Gandhiji inspired by his spiritual guide and Great Jain Seer Srimad Rajchandraji. In fact, this is the enlightened path of Peace for Problem-solving through Self-understanding (Control SAMYAMA) - leading to Social Peace as well as individual Meditative Self Realisation attainment of Supreme Knowledge (KEVAL JNANA) and ultimately the Liberation (MOKSHA).

This entire experiment is presented here in soul - stirring Musical Melo-drama and is sure to touch the hearts and move the souls of the viewers and Listeners. If not, the Producers will feel that their labour has not been successful inspite of their dedicated efforts. The Producers feel confident that they will inspire and touch the hearts of the viewers.

Contents : Shlokas, historical prologue, songs (Bite Samvatsar, Viron ki Baat, Tyaga aur Pem ke path par, Shuddha Budda Chaitanyaghanm etc.,) Commentaries and Dialogues with the message of BAHUBALI - the specific BAHUBALI DARSHAN.

Project Gracefully sponsored & blessed by H.H. Jagadguru Karmyogi Swasthisri CHARUKEERTHY BHATTARAKA SWAMIJI, Chairman S.D.J.M.I. Managing Committee, Sri Kshetra SHRavanabelagola, on the occasion of GOMMARESHWARA BHAGWAN SRI BAHUBALI SWAMI MAHAMASTAKABHISHEKA MAHOTSAVA 2006. Copyrighted & Produced by VARDHAMAN BHARATI INTL. FOUNDATION, BANGALORE, Prabhat Complex, K G Road, Bangalore-560009. Concept, Script, Music : Prof. PRATAPKUMAR J. TOLIYA, Editing : Dr. V.K. Jain, Addl. Voices : SUMITRA TOLIYA, Dr. V.K. JAIN, H.J. Sanghavi, Advocate, Ashok Sanghavi, Mukul Jain. Dance & Choreography : KUM KINNARI TOLIYA, KUM ILA JAIN, KUM. JNANESHWARI. Videographers : CINIMAGE. Recordists Parekh Recording Centre, Bangalore.

AUDIO
CD

બાહુબલી દર્શન



શ્રી બૃંગારાંધ્રા માર્ગ
પ્રા. પ્રતાપકુમાર જ. તોલ્યા
Prof. Pratapkumar J. Toloya

બાહુબલી દર્શન
BAHUBALI DARSHAN

VCD

બાહુબલી દર્શન



શ્રી બૃંગારાંધ્રા માર્ગ
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બાહુબલી દર્શન
BAHUBALI DARSHAN

The Gandhian Marxist

10/3/2002

SUDHA NARASIMHACHAR speaks to
social worker and writer
Professor E P Menon

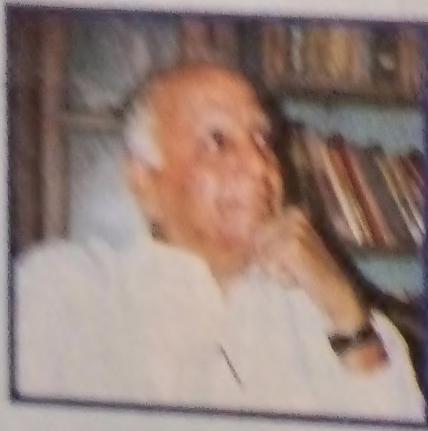
PROFESSOR E P Menon who draws inspiration from Karl Marx has worked with the likes of Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave. A voracious reader and writer, he has authored three novels and has written short stories and articles for newspapers and journals.

The founder of the Friends' World College and India Development Foundation, he an environmentalist, a peace lover, a social worker, a well-wisher of the mankind and a staunch Gandhian Marxist.

He spoke to Sudha Narasimhachar on his work and life. Here are the excerpts.

The importance of culture in the development of an economy, a society, a nation

Culture is a product. Geography decides economics; geography and economics decide politics; geography, economics and politics decide history; all the four together make a culture - which implies human culture and not American or Indian culture.



global situation and our own situation, I think we are right in not signing the treaty. When India and Pakistan tested nuclear bombs, the whole world was quick in criticising us. In the name of globalisation,

America is trying to enslave Latin American, African and Asian countries. We are also slowly yielding to this policy.

Is religion a necessity or personal discipline?

In the present scheme of things, it appears like a necessity, but I believe it is purely personal. I am an atheist if I respect somebody, then I will be truthful to him. This has nothing to do with religion. Religion is a structure, which does help people to build self-discipline, though ironically, all religions have been cause of more wars than peace, probably because human beings have not properly linked materialistic interest with other social interests. In fact, great thinkers like Jesus Christ and Buddha did not

of Indian culture. Family, psychology, human relationships, material interests, economics, all put together make culture.

Your views on the onslaught of globalisation on our culture and ways to prevent the same.

The real onslaught is not on our culture but on our economy and politics. We are afraid of the sex and violence depicted in the media and the fear is genuine. It is impossible to protect our children from all this because of the sporadic development in communication. What is best for a person and the family has to be decided by the person and the family. A new kind of openness in accepting each other's values, customs and systems is necessary. There is a good cultural confluence going on which is very necessary.

Your views on the quality of regional language literature. Do you agree that this literature sometimes is of does not get due recognition?

Recognition does not come probably because of the geographical limitation of the language. English as a language developed to this extent because of the British domination over the world. Our literature is equally good but the readership is less. There is a very close relationship between the politics, economics and the languages.

Do you agree with India's stand on non-proliferation treaty?

From my point of view of the

create religions but their followers did. They only spoke of simple basic principles of human life. If one understands these principles of life and leads by example, it is good enough for the young. To quote Karl Marx, "Religion is the SIGH of the OPPRESSED; it's the HEART of me HEARTLESS WORLD; OPIUM of the MASSES."

What does you is the reason for so many people taking to violence instead of a peaceful, non-interfering life? Is man basically a violent being?

I make a distinction between rebellion and violence. Rebellion is a state of mind. When there is injustice, some people stand up and say 'I will not tolerate this'. This is rebellion. This is constructive. Violence in society is increasing because of basic disparities and economic injustice. Economic inequalities have to be fought to contain violence.

Is the so-called globalisation really a step towards bringing mankind closer in hearts or only 'colonisation' by super economic powers in that garb?

Globalisation has done both. In terms of communication, travel and cultural integration, globalisation has helped. We are able to understand each other better and are not isolated. The kind of globalisation now being perpetuated by Europe and America on Africa, Latin America and Asia is pure and simple economic exploitation. We in India are going back to those days of slavery in a sophisticated way.

march symbolised

In the hindsight of post-independence, the March was reconstructed in a way that placed everyone on the Indian side in a more positive and favourable light



Bapu

A Lino-Cut by Nand Lal Bose

ON THE SALT MARCH

By Thomas Weber. Harper Collins Publishers India Pvt Ltd
7/16, Ansari Road, Daryaganj,
New Delhi 110 002 1997. Pp 594

provingly quotes Salman Rushdie in support of the view that "sometimes legends make reality and become more useful than facts." Weber as an academic is seemingly unable to free himself from the tyranny of facts. But as one

who embarked on a Gandhian pilgrimage and has had grass roots experience of India he grants that the March, even in a romanticised version or as myth or symbol, can contribute more to an understanding of the country than

as an event in history.

This enables him to conclude, as most Indians have probably done instinctively, that the March was a "living sermon to the country." Much less understood was the corollary, namely, that the March was less important than the myth it created; and that in turn the myth was less significant than the point that it was necessary. Weber steers close to the heart of the matter when he writes of *darshan*, not as something given or received, but as something that "occurs" and of people listening to Gandhi "in order to hear the sound of his voice rather than take in the content." This is a book of many such insights, combining something of western scholarship with something of the Oriental approach to event-cum-myth.

The fallout of the March as a

The salt march helped to focus public attention on the freedom struggle. Second, it signalled defiance of British rule. And third, it was an overt demonstration of the extent and limitations of the non-violent movement

campaign was nil. The salt tax was not abolished. But it had demonstrated to the world, even if not immediately, "the nearly flawless use of a new instrument of peaceful militancy." It invested the little man with a stick with a kind of power that slowly confounded the colonial authority. So political symbolism had a positive and fruitful orientation in Gandhi's time. Today symbolism has no such positive connotation and has been reduced to a device for substituting gesture for substance.

N J Nanporia

in a "sacrificial" mode, adverse to a voluntary cut in his salary. When Gandhi carefully chose the route she wore to underline her identification with the region she was visiting. This is the brand of symbolism one encounters in contemporary India. But anyone seeking the origins of this practice cannot do better than to trace them to the greatest act of political symbolism in the nation's recent history, namely, the Salt March of

which had the merit of simultaneously sending out three messages. First, it helped to focus public attention on the freedom struggle. Second, it signalled defiance of British rule without the vulgarity of a physical confrontation. And third, it was an overt demonstration of the extent and limitations of the non-violent movement. It is, in short, the spirit and philosophy of Gandhism written all over it.

Yet as Weber argues in this book, nowhere in the vast Indian literature is there anything to cast some light on the March as a march, as it unfolded day to day. What we have is an account of Weber's experience as he walks along Gandhi's route which is the travelogue of this work. But complementing it is a hermeneutic bid to sort out a fact from the surrounding cloud of myth. The paucity of "facts" which Weber encountered owed nothing to the national indifference to facts as a basis for history; nothing also to the perception of myth rather than fact as most home in public symbolism; and nothing even more to a tendency to reinvent the past to suit the present.

A point of interest is that in Indian public opinion understood the March as symbolic, but in the main saw it as an unrealistic defiance of the might of the British empire. In the hindsight of post-independence the March was reconstructed in a way that placed everyone on the Indian side in a more positive and favourable light. A symbolic event allows more room for imagination than strict adherence to the discipline of history. So what finally matters, Weber himself seems to concede, is not what factually happened, but how the Indian sub-conscious views the March and how its perception evolved with the preach and achievement of independence.

A propos of which Weber ap-